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SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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India bags Gold, Silver, 2 Bronze at Paralympics

CHATEAUROUX/PARIS, 30 AUG

The extraordinary Avani Lekhara became the first Indian to win two successive Paralympic gold medals with a record-breaking performance that cemented her place as one of the finest para-shooters in the world on a history-making day for the country, which also snared its maiden track medal through Preethi Pal.

The 22-year-old Avani, who was paralysed waist-down owing to a car accident as an 11-year-old, claimed the landmark gold in the women's 10m air rifle (SH1) shooting competition in Chateauroux.

On the second day of competitions, India also won a silver medal through Manish Narwal in the men's 10m air pistol (SH1) final, and two bronze medals. The first of these came from 37-year-old late-bloomer Mona Agarwal, also a wheelchair-bound athlete, in the same event in which Avani reigned supreme and the second was clinched by Preethi in the women's 100m (T35) meet in Paris with a personal best performance. India occupied the 10th spot in the overall standings ahead of Japan and Korea. The bespectacled Avani carved out a niche for herself by triumphing in a final which went down to the wire, shooting 249.7 to erase her own Paralympic record of 249.6 set in the Japanese capital in the summer of 2021. It was the first time India had a double podium finish in the same event at the Paralympic Games. Tokyo Games gold-medallist shooter Manish displayed pluck and courage in ample measure before ending with a silver after shooting 234.9. Moving away from the shooting range, Preethi won India's first athletics medal in a Paralympics track event as she clinched a bronze in the women's T35 100m competition with a personal best time of 14.21 seconds. T35 classification is meant for athletes who have coordination impairments such as hypertonia, ataxia and athetosis. *—PTI*

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Champai joins BJP, cites spying row as key reason

RANCHI, 30 AUG

Former Jharkhand chief minister Champai Soren joined BJP on Friday, two days after he resigned from the JMM citing dissatisfaction with the party's current style of functioning and "bitter humiliation". Soren, along with a large number of his supporters, crossed over to the saffron party. The veteran politician visibly became emotional after he was welcomed into the saffron fold. After joining the saffron camp, he said, "After I was put under surveillance by the Jharkhand government in Delhi and Kolkata, my resolve to join BJP strengthened." The joining of the 67-year-old leader to BJP is seen as a significant boost for the party's efforts to strengthen its connection with the Scheduled Tribes, a strong support base of the JMM. Champai, known as 'Jharkhand's Tiger' for his pivotal role in the fight for statehood, was appointed as chief minister on 2 February, following Hemant Soren's resignation and subsequent arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.*—PTI*

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Delhi court orders framing charges against Tytler

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Forty years after the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, a Delhi court on Friday ordered framing of charges for murder and other offences against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler in a case related to the killing of three people in north Delhi's Pul Bangash area during the violence. Special CBI judge Rakesh Siyal said there was sufficient evidence against Tytler, a former union minister, to put him on trial. *—PTI*

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At 6.7%, GDP reaches 15-month low in Q1

This is due to agri sector's poor performance

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

India's economic growth slowed to a 15-month low of 6.7 per cent in April-June 2024-25, mainly due to poor performance of the agriculture and services sectors, government data showed on Friday.

The gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by 8.2 per cent in the April-June quarter of 2022-23.

India, however, remained the fastest-growing major economy, as China posted a 4.7 per cent growth in April-June 2024. The previous low of 6.2 per cent was recorded in the January-March quarter of 2023. According to National Statistical Office (NSO) data, the agriculture sector gross value added (GVA) growth decelerated to 2 per cent from 3.7 per cent in the April-June quarter of 2023-24.

The expansion in 'financial, real estate and professional services' GVA too slowed to 7.1 per cent from 12.6 per cent in the year-ago quarter.

However, GVA in the manufacturing sector accelerated to 7 per cent in the first quarter of the current fiscal compared to 5 per cent a year ago.

"GDP at Constant Prices in Q1 of 2024-25 is estimated at Rs 43.64 lakh crore against Rs 40.91 lakh crore in Q1 of 2023-24, showing a growth rate of 6.7 per cent," NSO.

It further stated that nominal GDP or GDP at current prices in Q1 of 2024-25 is estimated at Rs 77.31 lakh crore against Rs 70.50 lakh crore in Q1 of 2023-24, showing a growth rate of 9.7 per cent. As per the data, the output (GVA) in the 'mining and quarrying' accelerated to 7.2 per cent in the first quarter from 7 per cent a year ago.

Electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services grew by 10.4 per cent from 3.2 per cent. The construction segment also grew by 10.5 per cent from 8.6 per cent a year ago. *—PTI*

The agriculture sector gross value added growth decelerated to 2 per cent from 3.7 per cent ***PHOTO: PTI***

EYES ON M'RASHTRA POLLS

I bow my head at Shivaji's feet and apologise: Modi

PALGHAR, 30 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday apologised to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and those hurt by the collapse of the warrior king's statue in coastal Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra.

"Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is not just a name or a king. For us, he is our deity. Today, I bow my head at his feet and apologise to my deity," Modi said, after laying the foundation stone of the Rs 76,000 crore Vadhvan Port project in Maharashtra's Palghar district.

A political row has erupted after the 35-foot statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, built at Rajkot fort in Malvan tehsil of coastal Sindhudurg district, collapsed on August 26. Modi had unveiled the statue in December last year during the Navy Day celebrations in Sindhudurg district.

Meanwhile, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Ambadas Danve on Friday targeted the Maharashtra government over the statue collapse and asked Chief Minister Eknath Shinde whether a scientific study was carried out before deciding the specifics of the statue like its height.

He also sought to know if a specific height of the statue was maintained to fulfil the political ambitions of someone. The Maharashtra government has set up a technical committee comprising engineers, IIT experts and Navy officials to probe the statue collapse. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar visited the Rajkot fort here where a 35-foot statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and vowed to erect a grand structure of the warrior king at the same place. In a post on X, Pawar called Shivaji the pride and self-respect of Maharashtra. *—PTI*

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the the 35-foot statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, built at Rajkot fort statue. The staute collapsed on 26 Aug ***PHOTO: PTI***

AASHIQ ABU QUITS FROM FEFKA OVER HEMA PANEL ROW

KOCHI, 30 AUG

Noted Director Aashiq Abu on Friday resigned from the Directors' Union of the Film Employees Federation of Kerala (FEFKA) citing its "damning silence" over the recent Hema committee report, which reveals sexual harassment of women by various directors and actors in the Malayalam film industry. Abu's resignation comes at a time when several members have allegedly expressed frustration over the silence of FEFKA General Secretary B Unnikrishnan. Abu said the "damning silence" of the organisation and its press release, which contained statements that "a reaction will be issued after studying the report," were disappointing. Multiple FIRs have been registered against many high-profile Malayalam film personalities following allegations of sexual harassment by women in the industry, in the wake of revelations in the Justice K Hema Committee report. *—PTI*

Aashiq Abu ***PHOTO: MUBI***

BESCOM TIGHTENS LATE POWER BILL PAYMENT RULES

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

The Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) on Friday said that from 1 September, if consumers fail to pay electricity charges within 30 days of receiving bills or do not pay the required additional security deposit, it would disconnect their power supply. BESCOM said the decision was taken as per the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission recommendation and that it would strictly enforce it from 1 September. Domestic and commercial consumers, apartments and consumers with temporary electricity connections must ensure payment of bills within 30 days, it said. At present, after meter reading in the first 15 days of each month, metre readers, along with linemen, revisit the premises of consumers with outstanding bills to disconnect their electricity supply. *—PTI*

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Assam Assembly stops 2 hour Friday namaz break

- The rule will be implemented from the next session, an Assembly official said.

GUWAHATI, 30 AUG

The Assam Assembly will do away with a two-hour break provided on Fridays to facilitate Muslim legislators to offer 'namaz', Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

The rule will be implemented from the next session, an Assembly official said.

In a post on X, Sarma said, "By doing away with the 2 hour Jumma break, @AssamAssembly has prioritised productivity and shed another vestige of colonial baggage. This practice was introduced by Muslim League's Syed Saadulla in 1937."

For the last time, this two-hour break was provided on Friday, the final day of the Autumn session of the assembly, the official said.

An official statement circulated in the House, a copy of which was made available to reporters, said the Rules Committee of the Assembly had unanimously agreed to drop this practice. *—PTI*

Ownership Post-Merger

21.1% Singapore Airlines

74.9% Tata Group

SIA will invest ₹2,059 crore in Air India to hold its 21.1% stake

Current fleet

70 aircraft Singapore Airlines

142 aircraft Air India

New routes

Ho Chi Minh City, Manila, Seattle, Dallas, Gatwick, Bengaluru-Singapore, Kochi-Doha, Kolkata-Bangkok

Employee Impact

5,100 Vistara

19,000 Air India

23,000+ Total

Why the merger?

Vistara has been a loss making company since its inception due to high operational costs

AI is struggling with financial losses high debt

The merger aims to revitalise AI's image & service quality by leveraging Vistara's modern fleet

VISTARA-AI MERGER

Tata Group's Air India and Vistara, a joint venture with Singapore Airlines, have officially merged to form India's largest airline group. Here is all you need to know about one of the biggest deals of avaiation sector

Vistara	Air India	SINGAPORE AIRLINES
Founded: 2013 by Tata Sons & Singapore Airlines	**Founded:** 1932 by RD Tata	**Founded:** 1972 by S'pore govt
₹7,006 cr Net worth	₹31,377 cr Net worth	S$44.3 billion Net worth
₹1,393 cr Net loss	₹313.77 billion Net loss	S$2.73 billion Net loss
		Debt: S$13.45 billion

Vistara to fly into sunset on 11 Nov

NEW DELHI/SINGAPORE, 30 AUG

The nearly 10-year-old Vistara will fly into the sunset on 11 November as part of the merger with Tata Group-owned Air India, with the deal moving closer to completion after the Indian government approved Singapore Airlines' Rs 2,058.5-crore foreign direct investment in Air India Group.

The merger, announced in November 2022, will see Singapore Airlines snapping up a 25.1 per cent stake in the Air India Group, and will create one of the world's largest airline groups. On Friday, Singapore Airlines (SIA) said the Indian government has approved its proposed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) into the enlarged Air India Group as part of the ongoing merger of Air India and Vistara. Vistara is a 51:49 joint venture between Tatas and SIA.

With regulatory approvals in place, Air India CEO and MD Campbell Wilson told the employees on Friday that 12 November has been set as the date for the movement of aircraft and crew of Vistara to Air India. Loss-making Vistara had a domestic market share of 10 per cent in July. "Starting 03 September 2024, customers will, progressively, no longer be able to make bookings with Vistara for travel on or after 12 November 2024," Vistara said in a release. Thereafter, Vistara aircraft will be operated by Air India and bookings for the routes operated by these planes will be redirected to Air India's website.

The government's approval for SIA's Rs 2,058.5-crore FDI is the last major clearance for the merger that was announced in November 2022. *—PTI*

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NGT notice over microplastic in salt, sugar

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The National Green Tribunal has sought a response from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and others in a matter regarding the presence of microplastics across all salt and sugar brands in the country.

The tribunal was hearing a matter where it had taken suo motu (on its own) cognisance of a PTI report regarding these microplastics being present in various forms, including fibre, pellets, films and fragments.

In an order passed on 23 August, a bench of NGT Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava said, "The news item highlights that the size of these microplastics ranged from 0.1mm to 5mm. The highest levels of microplastics were found in iodised salt, in the form of multi-coloured thin fibre and films.

In sugar samples, the concentration of microplastics ranged from 11.85 to 68.25 pieces per kg, with the highest concentration found in non-organic sugar." The bench also comprising expert member A Senthil Vel said, "The news item also highlights that the presence of microplastics can have adverse and long-term health impacts on human health. *—PTI*

Unpaid power bill? You now get 30 days before blackout

Earlier, BESCOM used to cut power in first 15 days of the month

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

The Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) on Friday said that from 1 September, if consumers fail to pay electricity charges within 30 days of receiving bills or do not pay the required additional security deposit, it would disconnect their power supply.

BESCOM said the decision was taken as per the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) recommendation and that it would strictly enforce it from 1 September.

Domestic and commercial consumers, apartments and consumers with temporary electricity connections must ensure payment of their bills within the stipulated 30 days, it said.

"Failure to pay the bill within 30 days will result in disconnection on the day of the meter reading, which typically occurs in the first 15 days of every month. BESCOM urges all consumers to pay their bills on time to avoid any inconvenience," the state-owned power company said.

BESCOM also said that there may be instances where the payment does not immediately reflect in the BESCOM system ***PHOTO: REPRESENTATIVE***

At present, after meter reading in the first 15 days of each month, meter readers, along with linemen, revisit the premises of consumers with outstanding bills to disconnect their electricity supply.

"Starting 1 September, linemen will accompany the meter readers in the first visit itself and immediately disconnect the electricity supply of consumers with overdue bills," BESCOM said.

A period of 15 days is provided for electricity bill payments until the due date without interest, the power company said, adding that an additional 15-day grace period is available for payments with interest after the due date.

"However, if the bill remains unpaid, the electricity supply will be disconnected on the next meter reading day. Connections will be disconnected if the outstanding amount, including the additional security deposit, exceeds Rs 100," BESCOM said.

BESCOM also said that there may be instances where the payment does not immediately reflect in the BESCOM system when paying electricity bills online. In such cases, consumers should present their payment receipt to the BESCOM staff to avoid disconnection.

—PTI

AFTER PICS GO VIRAL

4 officials booked over VIP treatment to actor Darshan

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Bengaluru City Police have booked two undertrial inmates and four jail officials at Parappana Agrahara Central Prison over VIP treatment given to Kannada actor Darshan.

The allegations arose after visuals showing Darshan allegedly enjoying privileges that are not commonly offered to other inmates surfaced online. Three FIRs were registered, including against Darshan, under sections of Prisons Act and Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita.

City Commissioner B Dayananda said, "The two undertrials, Dharma and Satya, are accused in a murder case. A third FIR, which highlights corruption, names jail officials Sudarshan, Mujeeb, Parameshwar Naik and KB Rayamane." Earlier this week, nine prison officials, including the chief superintendent of Parappana Agrahara jail, were suspended following a preliminary probe into the alleged "special treatment" given to Darshan. On Thursday, Darshan was transferred from Parappana Agrahara Central Prison to Ballari Jail.

The jail officials came under fire after visuals showing Darshan enjoying coffee and cigarette went viral on social media ***PHOTO: SCREENGRAB***

Dayananda said, "We have obtained another photo of Darshan given special treatment. The investigation into these cases has been handed over to Bengaluru South-East division under the supervision of Additional Commissioner of Police, Raman Gupta, with Sarah Fathima overseeing the process."

The Police Commissioner said an investigation is underway regarding the smuggling of banned tobacco products and mobile devices . Dayananda said, "Authorities are interrogating inmates at Parappana Agrahara to uncover how these items were brought inside and to ensure this incident does not repeat itself again we are planning to implement AI cameras to monitor inmates more effectively in Bengaluru Central Prison." *–Salar News*

Kolaramma Temple in Kolar was adorned with 10,001 lotus to mark the last Friday of Shravan month. The flowers were airlifted from Kerala and the total expense for decoration was around Rs 2.5 lakh. ***PHOTO: SALAR***

Influencer stopped from making reel on Malpe beach

MALPE, 30 AUG

An 'influencer' was allegedly stopped by the police while shooting a reel, because she was wearing a bikini, at Padukere beach. The woman had posted a reel about the incident, which has been picked up by local television channels and news outlets. According to her, policemen refused to allow her to continue to shoot, as long as she was "indecently" dressed. The incident occurred on Thursday evening. However, the Malpe police told PTI that they have 'no record' of such an incident and that no policemen were assigned to stop the photo shootout. Khyati Shree explained in her reel that she had come to Malpe Beach to shoot an Instagram reel. Her husband was shooting the video of her in a bikini on the beach when two policemen approached them. They were told that some people present there were objecting to the way she was dressed. The woman said they had to leave the place soon after as they felt unsafe. ***—PTI***

Namma Cargo takes charge of direct services

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has terminated its contract with Strategic Infra Services Private Limited due to complaints about mismanagement of 'Namma Cargo' parcel delivery service. After the termination, which will be effective from 23 November, 2024, KSRTC plans to directly oversee cargo operations, eliminating commission fees to boost revenue. KSRTC has asked the company to deliver the pending packages by October. In 2020, KSRTC partnered with Bengaluru-based Strategic Infra Services Private Limited launched 'Namma Cargo' to deliver parcel in its bus routes. This partnership allowed the private company to establish parcel counters at bus stations across Karnataka. Namma Cargo uses KSRTC, North Western Karnataka Road Transport Corporation and Kalyana Karnataka Road Transport Corporation buses to transport parcels. Despite a target of Rs 100 crore set for 2023-24, Namma Cargo could reach a turnover of only Rs 25 crore annually. ***—Salar News***

Court allows minister's wife to sue BJP's Yatnal for defamation

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

A single bench of the people's court in Bengaluru has heard a complaint filed by Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao's wife, Tabu Rao, and directed the filing of a criminal defamation case.

BJP MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal, while speaking to the media in Vijayapura, on 4 April during the Lok Sabha elections, said, "In Rao's house, there is half of Pakistan. It is an addiction for him to make anti-national statements."

Tabu subsequently filed a private complaint at Sanjay Nagar police station regarding the comment, and a case was registered against Yatnal.

Tabu also presented evidence to the court, including newspaper reports and supporting documents.

PHOTO: X

In light of this, the court issued a summons to Yatnal.

Earlier, Rao alleged on Friday that there was a conspiracy to target Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and destabilise the government, but he maintained that the rule of law should be followed.

His comments came after Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot sanctioned the prosecution of Siddaramaiah in the alleged MUDA scam earlier this month. The Chief Minister claimed on 23 August that the Governor had sanctioned his prosecution based on "hearsay."

Rao said , "Our Chief Minister has done nothing wrong. It is a conspiracy to target him and destabilise the government. Even the opposition knows there was no misuse of power. All MLAs, party workers, and leaders are with the Chief Minister. The party has become more united now after this incident."

He added, "Corruption exists in our system. But when something happens, you should act, and the rule of law should be followed."

—ANI

CHAIR TO THE RESCUE

Millers Road residents covered a manhole with a bamboo chair to prevent motorists from falling into it on Friday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD***

HC ADJOURNS HEARING ON POCSO CASE AGAINST BSY

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

High Court on Friday adjourned to 5 September the hearing of BJP leader and former Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa's petition seeking to quash the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act case registered against him.

Justice M Nagaprasanna adjourned the hearing to 5 September.

The court had earlier granted Yediyurappa temporary relief from arrest, enabling him to attend the court proceedings.

According to police, Yediyurappa was booked under the POCSO Act, 2012, and Section 354 A (Sexual harassment) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) following a complaint by the mother of a 17-year-old girl alleging that he molested her daughter during a meeting on February two this year, at his residence in Dollars Colony here.

Yediyurappa had however denied the charge.

The victim's brother had filed a petition in the court last week alleging that though the case was registered nearly three months ago, no progress has been made in the investigation. The petitioner meanwhile, prayed for a direction to arrest and interrogate Yediyurappa.

After the Sadashivanagar police registered the case in March against Yediyurappa the Director General of Police Alok Mohan issued an order transferring it to the CID for further investigation.

The 54-year-old woman, who had levelled the charge against Yediyurappa, died at a private hospital here last month, due to lung cancer. *—PTI*

Mansoor appointed as AICC Secretary for Kerala

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Congress on Friday announced a new team of secretaries and joint secretaries, including seven from Karnataka, in the first large-scale reshuffle in these positions after Mallikarjun Kharge took over as party president.

Mansoor Ali Khan and PV Mohan have been assigned Kerala, while Anjali Nimbalkar has been appointed as secretary in charge of Goa, according to a statement from KC Venugopal, Congress General Secretary in-charge of Organisation. Suraj Hegde will be looking after Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, and BM Sandeep and UB Venkatesh will manage Maharashtra. Rojji M Mohan, Mayura S Jayakumar, P Gopi and Abhishek Dutt have been appointed as Secretaries for Karnataka.

These office bearers will be associated with the party's general secretaries and in-charges in the respective states. With Haryana Assembly elections scheduled to be held in a single phase on 1 October, the party has appointed Manoj Chauhan and Prafulla Vinodrao Gudadhe as secretaries for the northern state.

For Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Divya Maderna and Manoj Yadav have been appointed as Secretaries. The Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir will be conducted in three phases: 18, 25 September and 1 October.

Mansoor Ali Khan ***PHOTO: SALAR***

- There are seven secretaries from Karnataka, in the first large-scale reshuffle in these positions after Mallikarjun Kharge took over as party president.

Meanwhile, Netta D'Souza, Naveen Sharma, and Neeraj Kundan have been appointed as Secretaries of Organisation, while Pranav Jha and Gaurav Pandhi will serve in the office of the Congress President. Nitin Kumbalkar and Nilesh Patel have been named as Joint Secretaries of the Treasurer. Arathi Krishna was appointed to Indian Overseas Congress & Foreign Affairs. While Vineet Punia, has been given the same responsibility, Ruchira Chaturvedi has also been appointed secretary in the department along with him.

—Salar News

PHOTO: SALAR

FORMER MINISTER KH SRINIVASA DIES AT 85

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Former Karnataka minister and veteran Janata Parivar leader KH Srinivasa passed away on Friday at his Bengaluru residence at the age of 85 due to age-related illness. Srinivasa, who served in the 6th, 7th, and 8th Assemblies, held ministerial positions between 1978 and 1980, for Information, Youth Services, Energy, Planning and Kannada and Culture departments. He was also the Cabinet Minister for Energy and Information and served as Chairman of Public Accounts Committee in 1987-88.

His career began in 1967 when he won Sagar Assembly seat and served as the political secretary to then-chief minister Devaraj Urs in 1974. He was elected as MLA for Shivamogga in 1978 and served as minister of information and energy. He was a Legislative Council member and Leader of the Opposition from 1996 to 2002.*—Salar News*

BJP, JD(S) want to destabilise govt: CM

HUBBALLI, 30 AUG

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday accused Opposition BJP and its alliance partner JD(S) of trying to 'destabilise' the Congress government in the state, while clarifying that he has done nothing wrong to resign, in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) 'scam'.

Also alleging that the saffron party was still attempting "Operation Kamala" to bring down his government, he affirmed that they won't be successful in their attempts.

"Why are they asking for my resignation? Can it be given as soon as they ask? Just because Vijayendra (BJP state President) asks for resignation, can it be given? Then I will ask Vijayendra to resign as president of his party, will he give in?" Siddaramaiah asked in response to a question on BJP demanding his resignation in connection with the MUDA scam.

He said, "Argument will go on (in the court) tomorrow, let's see what the High Court decides. I have not done anything wrong."

Meanwhile, ruling Congress has given a call for 'Raj Bhavan Chalo' on Saturday to apprise Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot about him sanctioning an 'illegal order' to prosecute Siddaramaiah. *—PTI*

Stray dog attack leaves woman injured

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Three days after a pack of stray dogs killed a 76-year-old retired teacher in Jalahalli, a woman was attacked by a stray dog on a busy road in OMBR Layout of Banaswadi, North Bengaluru, on Friday.

The CCTV footage of the attack, which is widely circulated on social media, shows that the woman was walking when a dog suddenly bit her feet. She struggles to fend off the dog until local residents intervene and assist her. The footage also revealed her injured feet with visible bite marks and blood.

OMBR layout resident Venkat Ramakrishana told Salar News, "I had called BBMP regarding controlling stray dogs in the area and they responded that they are not responsible for it. Today (On Friday), this attack took place."

BBMP is running a helpline (080-22660000) and a mobile app (Namma Bengaluru Sahaaya 2.0) to report stray dog issues. *—Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

SUSPECTING FIDELITY

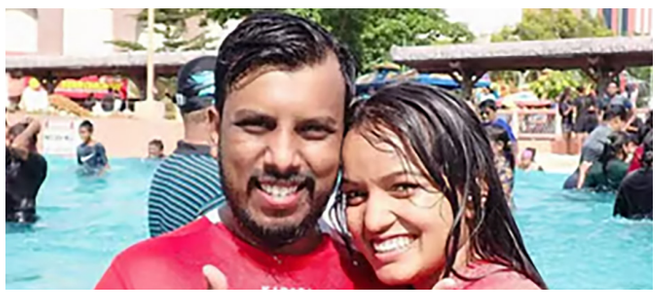
Man kills wife with knife she had for safety

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

A 31-year-old cab driver has been arrested for allegedly murdering his wife suspecting her fidelity. The knife she kept for self-defence came handy for the accused to commit the crime at Kengeri here, police said on Friday.

According to police, Kiran and Navyashree,28, a choreographer, hailed from Bhadravati in Shivamogga district. They were childhood friends and as they grew up, they fell in love and married.

Recently, Kiran started suspecting her fidelity and often quarreled with her for making regular calls to a male friend, the police said.



The accused often quarrelled with the victim for making regular calls to a male friend ***PHOTO: X/@543IN5OFFICIAL***

Navyashree had reportedly told her male friend that her husband was up to something and her life was in danger. The man had even advised her to report the matter to the police and be alert.

On 28 August, Navyashree, Aishwarya and her friend Sunil went in a car where the victim narrated her plight. Later, Navyashree returned home along with Aishwarya.

Aishwarya woke up the next morning only to find Navyashree lying in a pool of blood with her throat slit. Frightened at the sight, she reported the matter to the police.

According to Aishwarya, she was in a deep sleep and did not know what happened to her friend in the night.

Police said Kiran had entered the house using a duplicate key and committed the crime. He confessed to his crime and has been arrested. *—PTI*

HM to review PSI date amid UPSC exam clash

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

Karnataka Home Minister G Parameshwara on Friday said he would seek information from officials concerned regarding the UPSC Civil Services Examination clashing with the Police Sub-Inspector Recruitment exam on 22 September.

Addressing reporters here, he said the state government announced the PSI exam date before the Union Public Service Commission did, but this point will be considered.

"We will see. We will review it. Already we have announced the date. In case there is any possibility or if we get more representations (from the candidates), we can consider it (postponement of PSI exam)," Parameshwara said.

The Minister further said that the exams cannot be postponed always by citing clash of dates with other exams as an excuse.

"Everything was going on very smoothly. When I was the Home Minister earlier, thousands of people were recruited (in the police department) without any hindrance, but this time there were hiccups such as the PSI scam and the delay in conducting the exam," he said.

Two years ago, PSI recruitment scam came to light in which an Additional Director General of Police (ADGP) Amrit Paul was arrested along with several others. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Parl panel meet on Waqf bill witnesses heated arguments

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

A meeting of the joint committee of Parliament on the Waqf (Amendment) Bill on Friday witnessed fireworks with members vociferously opposing certain provisions of the draft legislation, leading to a brief walkout by opposition members. The panel, chaired by BJP member Jagadambika Pal, heard the views of All India Sunni Jamiyatul Ulama of Mumbai, Delhi-based Indian Muslims for Civil Rights (IMCR), Uttar Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board and Rajasthan Board of Muslim Waqf during the day-long sitting lasting nearly eight hours. Certain remarks made by BJP member Dilip Saikia against AAP member Sanjay Singh led to a heated exchange between opposition and BJP.—*PTI*

After SC's objection, T'gana CM regrets remarks on Kavitha

HYDERABAD, 30 AUG

In the wake of Supreme Court taking strong objection to his reported comments related to the bail granted to BRS MLC K Kavitha, Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Friday said the remarks have been taken out of context and expressed "unconditional regret" for the statements.

In a post on the social media platform 'X', he expressed his highest regard and full faith in the country's judiciary.The CM said he understands that certain press reports dated August 29 "containing comments attributed to him" have given the impression that he is questioning the judicial wisdom of the court. "I reiterate that I am a firm believer of the judicial process. I unconditionally express regret for the statements," he said.—*PTI*

Akal Takht declares Badal 'tankhaiya' for 'misconduct'

AMRITSAR, 30 AUG

Akal Takht on Friday declared Shiromani Akali Dal president Sukhbir Singh Badal 'tankhaiya', guilty of religious misconduct, for the "mistakes" committed by his party and the party's government from 2007 to 2017. Soon after the declaration, Badal said he bows his head and accepts the order of the Akal Takht. In a post on X in Punjabi, Badal said he will soon appear before the Akal Takht to apologise. After a meeting of the five Sikh head priests, the jathedar of the Akal Takht Gyani Raghbir Singh asked Badal to appear before the supreme temporal seat of the Sikhs within 15 days to seek apology for the decisions he took as the deputy chief minister and as SAD chief that deeply harmed the image of the 'Panth' and caused damage to Sikh interests. A day before the meeting of five Sikh head priests, Badal had appointed senior leader Balwinder Singh Bhundar as party's working president. —*PTI*

Sharad turns down measures under Z-plus security

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Nationalist Congress Party-SP (NCP-SP) Chief Sharad Pawar, accorded Z-plus protective cover recently, is learnt to have turned down certain measures suggested by security agencies. The Centre accorded him the Z-plus cover of the Central Reserve Police Force's (CRPF) VIP security wing after a threat assessment review by central agencies. However, Pawar is learnt to have conveyed to them that he has not been told why his security is being increased. The 83-year-old former Maharashtra chief minister is learnt to have rejected the proposals to deploy additional security personnel inside his house in the national capital. —*PTI*

Won't allow separate rule for Kukis: CM Biren

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh has emphatically rejected the demand by Kuki groups for a separate administration, presenting himself as a champion of the state's interest and one who will not allow its identity to be diluted.

In an interview to PTI Videos on Thursday, he described Manipur as a small, hard-working state and said "our forefathers" have a history of 2,000 years. "Many sacrifices were made to make this state. This state can't be broken or have a separate administration. We will not allow this," the chief minister stated.

This is the first unequivocal rejection of the demand by Kukis. At a press conference on Thursday in New Delhi, some representatives of Kuki-

N Biren Singh PHOTO: PTI

zo communities demanded the creation of a union territory with a legislature along the lines of Puducherry, arguing that it is the only way out of strife.

Singh, a Meitei accused by Kukis of siding with his community in the ethnic violence which erupted in May last year and polarised Manipur society like never before, has, however, expressed his support for a special development package for the state's hilly region where Kukis live.

Singh said he will also appeal to the Centre for a special package and acknowledged the need for the development of hilly areas.

He rejected the allegation of bias in dealing with the crisis, asserting that he is chief minister of every community, be it Meiteis, Kukis or Nagas.

Tagged by critics as a Meitei favouring his community, he said he allowed his position "to be diluted" and let the Centre take the lead in restoring peace through talks and security measures.

Singh expressed confidence that peace and reconciliation will be restored in five-six months, with the Centre playing a key role and applying "finishing touches" in brokering ethnic rapprochement.

—*PTI*

EAM: Era of uninterrupted dialogue with Pak is over

Actions have consequences & Art 370 is done, says EAM

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday said the "era of uninterrupted dialogue" with Pakistan is over even as he noted that India is "not passive" and whether events take a positive or negative direction, either way New Delhi will react.

In his address at a book launch here, Jaishankar also said for any country in the world, neighbours are "always a conundrum", and so are "major powers".

Major powers will be a conundrum because they are major, because of the breadth of their interests. They will always have an agenda, which will overlap with us, but to differing degrees, also diverge, he said.

In the case of China, you have a "double conundrum",

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in New Delhi, on Friday PHOTO: PTI

because it's a neighbour and a major power. So, the challenges with China fits this double definition, he added.

The book "Strategic Conundrum: Reshaping India's Foreign Policy" by former diplomat Rajiv Sikri talks about India's relationship with its neighbouring countries and the accompanying challenges.

On India's relations with Pakistan, he said, "I think the era of uninterrupted dialogue with Pakistan is over. Actions have consequences, and in so far as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, I think (Article) 370 is done. So, the issue today is what kind of relationship can we possibly contemplate with Pakistan."

"What I do want to say is that we are not passive, and whether events take a positive or negative direction, either way we will react," he added.

India's ties with Afganistan, Jaishankar said there is actually a "strong people-to-people relations", at the societal level, adding there is a certain goodwill for India. —*PTI*

BJP TO DIDI

'Don't write letters, answer questions'

KOLKATA, 30 AUG

The BJP on Friday slammed West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee calling her a "liar" and asked her to explain why she has not done anything to ensure implementation of existing "stringent" rules and regulations to protect women in her state.

This came after Banerjee wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reiterating her request for stringent central legislation and exemplary punishment on heinous crimes like rape and murder. She also sought mandatory provision for time-bound disposal of cases of rape/rape and murder.

"It is incumbent on Mamata Banerjee to explain why the West Bengal government hasn't done anything for implementing the stringent rules and regulations, which exist for protecting women

Mamata Banerjee PHOTO: PTI

and girls," BJP co-incharge for West Bengal Amit Malviya said in a post on X.

"But, enough is enough. The awakened conscience of Bengal now calls for accountability," the BJP leader added.

BJP's West Bengal unit president Sukanta Majumdar alleged that Mamata's "fire" comment has the potential to foment unrest in the various states.

Central agencies should keep a tab on the meetings attended by Banerjee to check whom she is interacting with, said Majumdar. —*PTI*

Tytler charged in 1984 Sikh riot case

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Forty years after the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, a Delhi court on Friday ordered framing of charges for murder and other offences against Congress leader Jagdish Tytler in a case related to the killing of three people in north Delhi's Pul Bangash area during the violence.

Citing a witness, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) had said in its charge sheet that Tytler came out of a white Ambassador car in front of Gurdwara Pul Bangash on 1 November, 1984 and instigated a mob by shouting "kill the Sikhs, they have killed our mother." Three Sikhs were then killed by the mob.

Special CBI judge Rakesh Siyal said there was sufficient evidence against Tytler, a former union minister, to put him on trial.

The court has listed the matter for 13 September when the

Jagdish Tytler PHOTO: PTI

judge is likely to ask Tytler whether he pleads guilty to the charges levelled against him.

If Tytler pleads not guilty and claims trial, the judge will formally frame the charges against him.

Anti-Sikh riots had erupted in several parts of the country in the aftermath of the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her Sikh bodyguards on 31 October, 1984.

A sessions court had in August last year granted anticipatory bail to Tytler in the case. —*PTI*

GLOBAL FINTECH FEST

Removed angel tax to promote fintech sector, says Modi

MUMBAI, 30 AUG

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the government is making necessary policy changes, like removal of Angel Tax, to promote the fintech sector, even as he asked the regulators to take additional measures to check cyber frauds which can have a crippling impact on startups.

Lauding the fintechs for democratising financial services, Modi said the sector, which has attracted USD 31-billion investment in the last 10 years, has played a key role in denting the parallel economy.

The Prime Minister was addressing the Global Fintech Fest (GFF) 2024, jointly organised by the Payments Council of India, the National Payments Corporation of India and the Fintech Convergence Council.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses a gathering during the Global FinTech Fest, in Mumbai, on Friday PHOTO: PTI

He said the domestic economy and the capital market are in a celebratory mood at a time when the nation is also going through a festive period.

He said that digital technology has introduced transparency in India and gave the example of the implementation of Direct Benefit Transfer used in hundreds of government schemes that has prevented leakages in the system.

About 800 speakers, including policymakers, regulators, senior bankers, industry captains, and academicians, from India and other countries are participating in the fest. —*PTI*

CONMAN SUKESH GETS BAIL IN BRIBERY CASE

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

A Delhi court on Friday granted bail to alleged conman Sukesh Chandrasekhar in a bribery case related to the AIADMK's "two leaves" election symbol, noting that he had undergone detention for a period more than the maximum jail term specified for the offence he was accused to have committed.

Special Judge Vishal Gogne granted the relief to him on a personal bond of Rs 5 lakh.

Chandrasekhar has been accused of acting as a middleman for AIADMK leader TTV Dinakaran and trying to bribe an Election Commission of India (ECI) official to secure the party's two leaves symbol for the faction led by V K Sasikala.

The judge said in his order that Chandrasekhar's detention beyond seven years "entails his mandatory release". —*PTI*

In fresh jolt, J&K BJP leader quits over ticket row

JAMMU, 30 AUG

In yet another rebellion within BJP in Jammu and Kashmir over ticket distribution for the elections, senior party leader Chander Mohan Sharma on Friday announced his resignation and threatened to contest as an Independent.

BJP is facing resentment over its ticket distribution in the Union territory, with party leaders and workers protesting in several districts of the Jammu region. This has prompted the party to launch a damage control exercise, deploying several top leaders, including Union ministers, to defuse the situation.

"There is immense resentment and anger among leaders and workers of the party over the unfair distribution of mandates. They are holding protests to express their discontent. Saddened by this, I, one of the senior-most leaders of the BJP, along with others, have resigned from the party," Sharma, the convenor of the 'Tawi Andolan', told reporters here.

Chander Mohan Sharma PHOTO: PTI

Advocate Sharma, who joined the BJP in the early 1970s, criticised the party leadership in J&K for improperly presenting the proposal for mandates to the party high command.

Sharma, who joined the Jan Sangh decades ago and faced multiple prison terms as a BJP activist, lamented at being ignored despite his senior position in the party unit.

Scores of BJP leaders from the Jammu North, Jammu East, Paddar, Reasi and Akhnoor segments have protested against the party at its headquarters and in the respective constituencies over the ticket distribution. —*PTI*

Former Jharkhand chief minister Champai Soren being felicitated by Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan while joining BJP. Meanwhile, JMM legislator Ramdas Soren took Champai's place PHOTO: PTI

JMM's Ramdas takes oath as J'khand minister

RANCHI, 30 AUG

JMM legislator Ramdas Soren on Friday took oath as a minister in the Hemant Soren government in Jharkhand.

The Ghatshila MLA replaced former chief minister Champai Soren in the state cabinet.

Governor Santosh Kumar Gangwar administered the oath of office and secrecy to Ramdas Soren at a function in Raj Bhavan here in the presence of Chief Minister Hemant Soren, senior leaders of the JMM-led alliance and several government officials.

The CM, in a post on X, congratulated Ramdas Soren and extended best wishes to him for taking the oath "as a minister in the Jharkhand government".

Soon after the swearing-in ceremony, Ramdas Soren met JMM chief Shibu Soren at his residence along with the CM and senior JMM-led alliance leaders.

Ramdas Soren was inducted into the state cabinet after Champai Soren had on Wednesday resigned as a minister and an MLA. He is scheduled to join the BJP this afternoon.

Ramdas Soren won the assembly elections in 2009 and 2019 and is also the JMM's East Singhbhum district president.

Champai Soren, who had taken oath as a minister in the Hemant Soren cabinet last month, also quit the JMM on 28 August, claiming that the state government's "present style of functioning and policies" compelled him to leave the party which he served for many years. Ramdas Soren won the assembly elections in 2009 and 2019 and is also the JMM's East Singhbhum district president.

He was arrested several times during the Jharkhand agitation and is considered one of the influential leaders from the Kolhan region. —*PTI*

MAHAYUTI RIFT?

Feel nauseous sitting with NCP: Sena Minister

MUMBAI, 30 AUG

NCP (SP) on Friday latched onto Shiv Sena Minister Tanaji Sawant's remark that "he feels like vomiting after sitting next to NCP ministers", saying it's time for the BJP to throw Ajit Pawar's party out of Mahayuti.

It's also the time for Ajit Pawar to "wake up and smell the coffee", said the rival party led by his uncle Sharad Pawar.

BJP, Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and NCP are the partners in the ruling coalition Mahayuti.

NCP (SP) spokesperson Clyde Crasto said Sawant's remark shows that Mahayuti does not need the NCP any longer. The RSS' mouthpiece had questioned the BJP why they aligned with Ajit Pawar. The BJP cadre is also posing the same question, he said.

Now, Shinde Sena leaders

Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde with State Deputy Chief Ministers Devendra Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar PHOTO: ANI

- The growing discomfort among Shinde Sena members over Ajit Pawar's inclusion in the government has now been starkly revealed through

are saying derogatory things like "feeling nauseating when they sit next to NCP leaders", Crasto said.

Speaking at an event on Thursday, Sawant, who is Maharashtra's health minister, said he is a hardcore Shiv Sainik and never got along with Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leaders.

"Even if we sit next to each other in the cabinet, I feel like vomiting after coming out," Sawant said.

Mahesh Tapase, another NCP (SP) spokesperson, claimed that Ajit has lost his self-respect and there is growing discontent within the ranks of the Shinde-led Sena over the alliance with NCP.

"I never imagined that Ajit Dada, who once commanded immense respect within the NCP, would compromise his self-respect for power," Tapase said.

The growing discomfort among Shinde Sena members over Ajit Pawar's inclusion in the government has now been starkly revealed through Sawant's remarks, Tapase said. —*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@PULSE_PUNE

SUV driven by 17-year-old mows down Mumbai man

MUMBAI, 30 AUG

A 24-year-old man, distributing milk in the early hours of Thursday, died after a speeding SUV driven by a teenage boy knocked down his two-wheeler in Goregaon area here, police said. The incident took place in Aarey Colony around 4 am. Navin Vaishnaw died after a Mahindra Scorpio which was on the wrong side collided with his two-wheeler, said a police official. As the accused driver is 17 years old, a case was also registered against the SUV owner Iqbal Jivani, 48, and his son Mohammed Faz Iqbal Jivani, 21, he said. After hitting the two-wheeler, the SUV hit an electric pole. The teenage driver tried to flee, but he had sustained injuries and was caught by police. *—PTI*

Residents forced to flee as MCD starts demolition drive

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

A demolition drive was carried out on Friday by authorities in southeast Delhi's Okhla Phase-2 JJ cluster under heavy security arrangements, officials said. Residents alleged that they have been living here for many years and that they were not given enough time to take out their belongings. Dheeraj, a resident of the area, said that they received a notice regarding the demolition two days ago. "They came here with their bulldozer around 10am. They did not give us time to take our belongings from our homes. Around 50 shanties are being razed here. We have been living in the area for past many years," he said. Anil Kumar, another resident, said, "Several families were living here for last 40 years. We have nowhere to go." *—PTI*

Labourer rapes 4-year-old girl in Palghar

PALGHAR, 30 AUG

A labourer has been arrested for allegedly raping a four-and-half-year-old girl in Maharashtra's Palghar district, police said on Friday. The police on Thursday arrested the 19-year-old accused in connection with the incident that occurred in Jawhar taluka on Wednesday. The child's parents were at work, and she was home with her grandparents when the accused allegedly entered her house and sexually assaulted her, an official said. The accused was a labourer involved in cable laying work in the victim's locality, the official said. The child informed her mother about the assault the next day, following which a complaint was lodged with the police, he said. The accused has been arrested under section 64 (rape) and other relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, the official said. *—PTI*

Constable aspirant dies after fainting during test

MEDININAGAR, 30 AUG

One of the 25 aspirants undergoing treatment at Medinirai Medical College and Hospital in Jharkhand's Palamu, who fainted during the physical test for a constable recruitment process in the excise department, died on Thursday night, a police officer said. Hospital superintendent (in-charge) RK Ranjan said the death might have been due to 'drug' consumption, but further investigation is ongoing. On Thursday, 25 aspirants, including the deceased, fainted while participating in the physical test (running) at Chiyanki airport in Medininagar. Over the past three days of the recruitment process, 60 candidates have fainted. The recruitment process is scheduled to continue until 9 September. *—PTI*

Sexual abuse rampant in TN industry: Kutty

TV actor Kutty Padmini alleges that she faced sexual abuse when she was 10 years old

CHENNAI, 30 AUG

Actor 'Kutty' Padmini and one of the members of the internal complaints committee set up by the South Indian Artistes' Association (SIAA) in 2019, during #metoomovement, on Friday said nothing will come out of all the actions being promised against sexual abuse in the film industry, unless it is backed by proper laws.

"In fact, the situation is so bad that I have not let my three daughters come anywhere near the Tamil film industry," the actor told PTI.

Padmini, who had started her acting career as a three-month-old baby and went on to win the National Award for Child Artiste for her performance in 'Kuzhandaiyum Deivamum (1965)', alleged that when she was only 10 years old, she faced sexual abuse.

"I told my mother about it and when my mother questioned the producers, we were

Kutty Padmini **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

simply chucked out of the film," said Padmini.

Even after all these years, the situation is the same, she said, pointing to singer Chinmayi, who had called out lyricist Vairamuthu during the #metoo movement, and actor Sri Reddy, who had alleged that she was assaulted by financier Subramani and his assistant Gopi.

"They were washed out from the market," said Padmini.

When asked about the 10-member committee promised by actor Vishal, who is also the general secretary of SIAA, Padmini said, the committee formed by them post the #metoo wave did not go anywhere.

> "The truth is that there is actually no proof for any of these, as women are often talking about it years later. So, it is very easy to cancel them. Take my case, child abuse is quite a serious offence, but the perpetrators went without any punishment," she said.

"The truth is that there is actually no proof for any of these, as women are often talking about it years later. So, it is very easy to cancel them. Take my case, child abuse is quite a serious offence, but the perpetrators went without any punishment. That has been the case always," she said. *—PTI*

Outrage grows against Kerala govt for 'shielding' rape accused

KOCHI/T'PURAM, 30 AUG

Protests raged in Kerala on Friday as outrage grew over shocking accounts from several female actors in the Malayalam film industry about sexual abuse, with the Leader of the Opposition, V D Satheesan, accusing the CPI(M)-led government of shielding the culprits, including actor-politician Mukesh, who stands accused of rape.

Meanwhile, Kerala police registered a second sexual assault case against Malayalam film actor Jayasurya within a span of 48 hours, following a fresh complaint from a woman actor alleging sexual misconduct, in addition to the existing

Congress workers scuffle with police during a protest against actors Mukesh and Siddique in Kochi on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

case registered against him on 28 August. Mahila Congress activists in Kochi and Kollam took to the streets, demanding the resignation of CPI(M) MLA Mukesh and a thorough investigation into the shocking allegations of sexual misconduct made by female actors in the Malayalam film industry to the Justice Hema Committee. *—PTI*

PROTEST IN ANDHRA

Hidden camera in girls' hostel; 300 videos, pics sold

KRISHNA DISTRICT, 30 AUG

A protest erupted at SR Gudlavalleru Engineering Collegein the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh after a hidden camera was discovered in a washroom of the girls' hostel and the videos were allegedly circulated among the students.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday ordered an enquiry.

Police have taken a final-year engineering student, who was believed to be involved in placing the camera, into custody. Reports indicate that more than 300 photos and videos from the women's hostel washroom were leaked, with some students reportedly buying these videos from student who is being questioned by police.

His laptop was seized and 300 obscene videos were recovered.

Hundreds of students have been prote sting at the college since Thursday midnight over the incident. Chanting slogans like "we want justice," students called for strict action against those behind the hidden camera and involved in circulating the videos.

The incident unfolded when a group of female students discovered a hidden camera in their washroom on Thursday evening,

Meanwhile, police registered a case over the alleged incident but noted that there were no such hidden cameras in the girl students' washroom.

"No hidden cameras were found in the girls' hostel. No evidence of the allegations was found. There is no need for the girls to worry over this issue," said an official statement, adding that police checked the laptops, mobile phones and other electronic gadgets of the suspects in the presence of students and college staff. Female students complained to Mines Minister K Ravindra that the management attempted to hush up the issue and also went to the extent of threatening students who lodge a complaint over the matter. *—Agencies*

No relief as rain fury continues

SHIMLA/ T'PURAM/ AMARAVATI/ AHMEDABAD, 30 AUG

Almost a month after flash floods triggered by a cloudburst hit the Samej area of Rampur district in Himachal Pradesh on 31 July, the body of a girl was recovered from Shimla on Friday, taking the death toll in the tragedy to 21.

The body, which appeared to be that of a 14- or 15-year-old girl, was in a severely mutilated condition and has been sent for postmortem, the officials said.

Orange alert in Kerala

As heavy rains lashed several districts of Kerala on Friday, leading to waterlogging of roads and traffic snarls in various parts of the state, India Meteorological Department (IMD) sounded an orange alert in seven districts.

The IMD issued an orange alert in Ernakulam, Idukki, Thrissur, Kozhikode, Wayanad, Kannur and Kasaragod districts of the state for the day.

Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) warned the people living in landslides and flood prone areas to move to safer places.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai announced an assistance of Rs 15 crore each to Kerala and Tripura, where heavy rains and landslides have wreaked havoc, a government official

PHOTO: PTI

here said on Friday.PTI

Heavy rainfall forecast for Andhra till 1 Sept

IMD on forecast heavy to very heavy rainfall in parts of Andhra Pradesh over the next three days from Friday, accompanied by strong surface winds.

It predicted heavy to heavy rainfall in parts of North Coastal Andhra Pradesh (NCAP), Yanam and South Coastal Andhra Pradesh (SCAP).

Evacuation warning in Kutch amid cyclone threat

The authorities in Gujarat's Kutch have asked people living in huts and makeshift houses to take shelter in schools, temples or other buildings after the IMD said that a deep depression over the area might turn into a cyclonic storm Officials urged locals to come forward and provide shelter to such poor people in their houses till Friday evening. *—PTI*

Wayanad marks a month since landslides

The rugged terrain in Chooralmala village a month after the Wayanad landslides disaster that struck Kerala on 30 July **PHOTO: PTI**

WAYANAD, 30 AUG

A post office littered with parcels of the dead and missing, a special police unit deployed to stop 'selfie tourists' and patrols to check thefts in abandoned houses is all that remains in the three Wayanad villages that were wiped off during the deadly landslides that occurred exactly a month ago.

An 8km radius of Punchirimattam, Chooralmala and Mundakkai villages was devastated by at least two massive landslides that hurtled down with ferocious volumes of water and debris around 2 am on 30 July claiming more than 231 lives even as 218 different human body parts have been found, as per latest official data.

The Kerala state highway no 39 leading to these picturesque villages of the hill district of Wayanad, bear a testimony to the heart wrenching tragedy as police vehicles, heavy earth movers, ambulances and rescue teams line up the stretch in anticipation of any emergency in view of the continuing downpour.

Houses -- many damaged or partially crumbled and some intact -- lay abandoned as the inhabitants have been moved by the government authorities to public shelters and rented houses, while a few others have shifted to the homes of their kin. *—PTI*

SC to set up 5-judge bench for Kerala vs Centre fund row

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The Kerala government on Friday moved Supreme Court seeking early setting up of a five-judge Constitution bench to hear its lawsuit against the Centre raising the issue of ceiling on net borrowing.

The state government has raised a question whether a State has an "enforceable right" to raise its borrowing limits from the Union government and other sources.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra was told by senior lawyer Kapil Sibal, appearing for the state government, that the matter was

PHOTO: PTI

referred to a Constitution bench on 1 April and the apex court official was not sending an email for setting up of the bench.

The apex court, however, had refused to grant any interim injunction to Kerala, saying the state has secured "substantial relief" during the pendency of the interim application.

The bench had referred to Article 293 of the Constitution, which deals with borrowing by states, and said this provision has not been so far subject to any authoritative interpretation by the apex court. "Since Article 293 of the Constitution has not been so far the subject to any authoritative interpretation by this court, in our considered opinion, the aforesaid questions squarely fall within the ambit of Article 145(3) of the Constitution. We, therefore, deem it appropriate to refer these questions for pronouncement by a bench comprising five judges," it had said. *—PTI*

LACKING 15 MICRONUTRIENTS

Indians deficient in iron, calcium, folate: Lancet

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

People across all age groups in India, both men and women, are consuming inadequate amounts of micronutrients critical for health, including iron, calcium and folate, as estimated in a study published in The Lancet Global Health journal.

The study is the first to provide estimates of insufficient consumption of 15 micronutrients across 185 countries, taken through diets without the use of supplements, according to an international team, including researchers from Harvard University, US.

The findings suggested that around the world, almost 70 per cent, or over 5 billion, people do not consume enough iodine, vitamin E, and calcium.

The researchers also found that within a country and an age group, more women were consuming inadequate amounts of iodine, vitamin B12 and iron, compared to men, whereas more men were consuming inadequate amounts of magnesium, vitamin B6, zinc and vitamin C, compared to women. In India, while more women consumed insufficient amounts of iodine, compared to men, more men consumed inadequate amounts of zinc and magnesium, compared to women, the team found. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

TELANGANA MAY BAN KANGANA'S 'EMERGENCY'

HYDERABAD, 30 AUG

Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has assured Sikh community leaders that the state government would consider banning the release of Kangana Ranaut's upcoming film 'Emergency' pending legal consultation, government adviser Mohammad Ali Shabbir said.

A delegation from the Telangana Sikh Society, led by former Indian Police Service (IPS) officer Tejdeep Kaur Menon, met Shabbir at the Secretariat here and requested for a ban on the screening of "Emergency".

The 18-member delegation submitted a representation, expressing deep concerns over the film's portrayal of the Sikh community, Shabbir said in a release on Thursday.

The delegation alleged that the film depicts Sikhs as terrorists and anti-nationals, a portrayal that is "offensive" and damaging to the community's image, the release said.

Shabbir requested the chief minister to consider banning the film in Telangana. *—PTI*

'FOUND HANGING FROM TREE'

2 booked for abetment of suicide in 2 Dalit girls' death

The curious case of the 2 dead girls

- The families of two Dalit teenagers, whose bodies were found hanging from a tree in UP's Farrukhabad, claimed "the girls were raped".
- The girls – aged 15 and 18 – went missing when they went to a temple for Janmashtami. They were neighbours and close friends.
- When washing the bodies for cremation, the families found nail marks and belt marks, among other injuries, they told news portal The Womb.
- They alleged there were stitch marks on the private parts of one of the girls.
- Police refused to show the post-mortem reports to the families and declared it case of suicides. The police allegedly took the bodies and cremated them at a ghat 12-13km away and no family member was taken along.

FARRUKHABAD, 30 AUG

Two men have been booked here on the charge of abetment of suicide after two Dalit girls, aged 15 and 18, hanged themselves, police said on Friday.

Their bodies were found hanging in an orchard on Tuesday, they said.

The men were booked under section 108 (abetment of suicide) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita on Thursday following a complaint from the girl's family members, Superintendent of Police (SP) Alok Priyadarshi said.

"The accused are in police custody and will be put under arrest after questioning," he said.

Police said the girls left their homes around 10pm on 26 August to visit a nearby temple on the occasion of

Police personnel investigate after the bodies of two girls were found hanging from a tree, at Kayamganj area in Farrukhabad, Tuesday. **PHOTO: PTI**

Janmashtami but did not return. After their bodies were found, a panel of doctors was formed to conduct the postmorterm. "Police investigation findings correlate with the postmortem report that the girls committed suicide. No injury marks have been found on the bodies," Priyadarshi had said on Wednesday. *—PTI*

ON ALERT!

Fishing boats are anchored at a fishing harbour after weather forecasters warned fishermen not to venture out to sea following a tropical storm developing in the Arabian sea in Karachi, Pakistan
PHOTO: PTI

35% women docs feel unsafe during night shifts

An Indian Medical Association (IMA) study has revealed that one-third of its respondent doctors, majority of them being women, felt "unsafe" or "very unsafe" during their night shifts, so much so that some even felt the need to start carrying weapons for self-defence.

A duty room was not available to 45 per cent of respondents during night shifts, found the online survey undertaken by IMA to evaluate safety concerns during night shifts among doctors in the backdrop of recent alleged rape and murder of a trainee woman doctor at the state-run RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata.

With 3,885 individual responses, it is the largest study from India on this topic, the IMA claimed.

The survey findings, compiled by Dr Rajeev Jayadevan, Chairman, Research Cell, Kerala State IMA, and his team, have been accepted for publication in IMA's Kerala Medical Journal October 2024 issue. The respondents were from over 22 states with 85 per cent of them being under 35 years while 61 per cent were interns or postgraduate trainees.

Women constituted 63 per cent, aligning with the gender ratio in some MBBS courses.

"Several doctors reported feeling unsafe (24.1 per cent) or very unsafe (11.4 per cent), totalling one-third of the respondents. The proportion of those feeling unsafe was higher among women," the survey findings showed.

Doctors of age 20-30 years had the lowest sense of safety and this group largely consists of interns and postgraduates.

A duty room was not available to 45 per cent of respondents during night shifts. Those with access to a duty room had a greater sense of safety.

The survey found that duty rooms were often inadequate due to overcrowding, lack of privacy and missing locks, forcing doctors to find alternative rest areas and one-third of available duty rooms did not have an attached bathroom.

Violence is predominantly experienced by junior doctors, who, being on the frontline, are particularly vulnerable but have limited involvement in administration or policy-making
PHOTO: PTI

Suggestions to enhance safety included increasing the number of trained security personnel, installing CCTV cameras, ensuring proper lighting, implementing the Central Protection Act (CPA), restricting bystander numbers, installing alarm systems and providing basic amenities such as secure duty rooms with locks were given by the doctors.

"The online survey was sent to doctors, both government and private, across India through a Google form. There were 3,885 responses within 24 hours," said Dr Jayadevan.

Doctors across the country, particularly women, report feeling unsafe during night shifts, the study said, highlighting there is substantial scope for improving security personnel and equipment in healthcare settings.

Modifications to infrastructure are essential to ensure safe, clean and accessible duty rooms, bathrooms, food and drinking water.

Adequate staffing, effective triaging and crowd control in patient care areas are also necessary to ensure that doctors can provide the required attention to each patient without feeling threatened by their work environment, it stated.

The lack of sufficient numbers of trained security personnel, inadequate lighting of the corridors, absence of CCTV cameras and unrestricted entry of unauthorised individuals into the patient care areas were among the most frequent remarks, the study said. Some doctors indicated the need to start carrying weapons for self-defence.

One doctor admitted that she always carried a foldable knife and pepper spray in her handbag because the duty room was located at the far end of a dark and deserted corridor.

Doctors who worked in casualty reported verbal and physical threats from people who were drunk or under the influence of drugs. Another doctor reported that she repeatedly experienced bad touch or inappropriate contact in a crowded emergency room.

The situation is worse in some smaller hospitals where there is limited staff and no security. Several doctors reported apathy from the administrators when security concerns were raised, a common excuse being that the seniors also had endured similar working conditions.

Violence is predominantly experienced by junior doctors, who, being on the frontline, are particularly vulnerable but have limited involvement in administration or policy-making.

Senior faculty members bear the responsibility of implementing policies to improve patient care delivery as well as enhancing security measures, thereby creating a safer work environment for the junior doctors.

Doctors across the country have called for a Central Protection Law to prohibit violence in all healthcare settings and enforce airport-like security measures, ensuring a safer working environment and better patient care. *—PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

What are 'click frauds'– and how can we stop them?

In the world of the internet, clicks are currency. The more people click on a website, social media post or an advertisement, the more that content generates revenue.

But cybercriminals can exploit this rapidly growing market for clicks through what are known as "click frauds". And everyone, from everyday internet users to large organisations that use the web to share content or sell their products, is vulnerable.

What is click fraud?

Click fraud occurs when someone creates a network of bots or sets up "farms" of human workers to generate clicks online. It can take many forms.

Fraudsters often use automated bots or click farms to generate fraudulent clicks on ads or likes on their own websites. They create websites and invite businesses to advertise on their site at a cost. If advertisers are paying per click, then the fraudster will earn money for their business (which is often a fake business) and divert traffic to their site.

Alternatively, a genuine business might create their own advertisements and place them on various websites. Cybercriminals might bombard these advertisements with clicks, which will be very costly for genuine businesses when they are paying per click.

The motivation here may be that the criminal has their own genuine business, and they are hoping the advertising cost will be so expensive it will put their competitor out of business.

A third method is that a criminal may create a fake website they hope users will click on.

This is because the site has a malicious link that will download malware onto a user's computer, or because they hope to scam the user in another way (for example, by paying upfront fees for a service or items that do not exist).

By increasing traffic to their website, the website moves up in online search rankings. This impacts the general user who believes that because the site is high up in the order, it is a genuine and popular business they should trust.

Higher clicks can lead to higher trust

The psychological theory of planned behaviour provides some explanation for why people might trust a site that has numerous clicks and likes compared to a site that has few.

According to the theory, human behaviour is guided by three main factors: attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Let's consider each of these with respect to click fraud:

Attitudes: people often associate higher numbers of clicks, likes and traffic with credibility and trustworthiness. This is based on the belief that if many others engage with a site, it must be valuable, reputable or of high quality.

Subjective norms: subjective norms involve the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform a behaviour. If people see their peers, or society in general, trusting and using sites with many clicks and likes, they may feel pressured to trust these sites as well. This social influence can reinforce the behaviour of valuing and trusting high-traffic sites.

Perceived behavioural control: high traffic, clicks and likes can serve as indicators a site is reliable, reducing the perceived risk and effort required to evaluate it. When people perceive it is easier to trust a site with many popularity indicators, they are more likely to trust that site.

How can you prevent click fraud?

Ad fraud software is one method to prevent harm from click fraud.

Businesses can use specialised ad fraud detection and prevention tools, such as ClickCease, Fraudlogix or DoubleVerify. These tools can analyse click patterns, detect anomalies and block suspicious activity.

Businesses can also use IP blacklists to identify and block known fraudulent IP addresses. An IP – or "internet protocol" – address is a unique identifying number for any device connected to the internet. Businesses can also employ geo-targeting to limit ad exposure to specific regions or locations, reducing the risk of fraudulent clicks from irrelevant or high-risk areas.

The general internet user can also be a part of the solution. We need to change our online shopping and trust behaviours. Some of the following checks will help users determine if a website or business is genuine:

Verify the source. Is it credible and well-known?

Hover over the URL. Is it a known web address? It may mimic one, so a close inspection is needed. For example, the legitimate website www.google.com might be www.go0gle.com become more aware of click fraud. Knowing it is prolific and that you are most likely to encounter it in your everyday life will help you learn to spot it and avoid it.

Use antivirus and anti-malware software protection to help protect you, identify malicious websites, and keep your software up to date. You cannot solely rely on this software to protect you, but it is an important part of the solution.

—The Conversation

Click fraud occurs when someone creates a network of bots or sets up 'farms' of human workers to generate clicks online
PHOTO: PIXABAY

WHO warns of increased STIs as condom use among teenagers drops

An urgent report from the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe reveals that condom use among sexually active adolescents has declined significantly since 2014, with rates of unprotected sex worryingly high. This is putting young people at significant risk of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unplanned pregnancies. The new data were published as part of the multi-part Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study, which surveyed over 242 000 15-year-olds across 42 countries and regions in 2014–2022.

Far-reaching consequences of unprotected sex

Overall, the report highlights that a substantial proportion of sexually active 15-year-olds are engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse, which WHO warns can have far-reaching consequences for young people, including unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions and an increased risk of contracting STIs. The high prevalence of unprotected sex indicates significant gaps in age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education, including sexual health education, and access to contraceptive methods.

Worrying decline in condom use

Compared to 2014 levels, the new data show a significant decline in the number of adolescents reporting condom use during last sexual intercourse. From the data, it is clear that the decrease in condom use is pervasive, spanning multiple countries and regions, with some experiencing more dramatic reductions than others.

The report underscores the urgent need for targeted interventions to address these concerning trends and promote safer sexual practices among young people within the wider context of equipping them with the foundation they need for optimal health and well-being.

"While the report's findings are dismaying, they are not surprising," noted Dr Hans Henri P. Kluge, WHO Regional Director for Europe. "Age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education remains neglected in many countries, and where it is available, it has increasingly come under attack in recent years on the false premise that it encourages sexual behaviour, when the truth is that equipping young persons with the right knowledge at the right time leads to optimal health outcomes linked to responsible behaviour and choices. We are reaping the bitter fruit of these reactionary efforts, with worse to come, unless governments, health authorities, the education sector and other essential stakeholders truly recognize the root causes of the current situation and take steps to rectify it. We need immediate and sustained action, underpinned by data and evidence, to halt this cascade of negative outcomes, including the likelihood of higher STI rates, increased health-care costs, and – not least – disrupted education and career paths for young persons who do not receive the timely information and support they need."

The report highlights that a substantial proportion of sexually active 15-year-olds are engaging in unprotected sexual intercourse
PHOTO: PIXABAY

Key findings from the report

- Decline in condom use: the proportion of sexually active adolescents who used a condom at last intercourse fell from 70 per cent to 61 per cent among boys and 63% to 57% among girls between 2014 and 2022.
- High rates of unprotected sex: almost a third of adolescents (30 per cent) reported using neither a condom nor the contraceptive pill at last intercourse, a figure that has barely changed since 2018.
- Socioeconomic differences: adolescents from low-affluence families were more likely to report not using a condom or the contraceptive pill at last sexual intercourse than their peers from more affluent families (33 per cent compared with 25 per cent)
- Contraceptive pill use: the report indicates that contraceptive pill use during last sexual intercourse remained relatively stable between 2014 and 2022, with 26% of 15-year-olds reporting that they or their partners used the contraceptive pill at their last sexual intercourse.

> Encouraging open and honest conversations about sexual health within families, schools and communities to reduce stigma and increase awareness is one way of promoting open dialogue

Call to action for policy-makers and educators

- Investing in comprehensive sexuality education: implementing and funding evidence-based sexuality education programmes in schools that cover a wide range of topics, including contraception, STIs, consent, healthy relationships, gender equality and LGBTQIA+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, plus) issues.
- Promoting open dialogue: encouraging open and honest conversations about sexual health within families, schools and communities to reduce stigma and increase awareness.
- Training educators: providing specialized training for teachers and health-care providers to deliver effective and inclusive sex education. Such resources should be made available in both school and out-of-school settings.
- Conducting further research: investigating the underlying reasons for the decline in condom use and the variations in sexual health behaviours across different populations to inform targeted interventions.

—WHO

Trump promises free IVF for women

This comes amid his 'attacks' against Kamala

WASHINGTON DC, 30 AUG

Donald Trump has pledged to make in vitro fertilisation (IVF) treatment free for all women and criticised a six-week abortion ban in Florida, the latest bid by the Republican to rebrand himself as a defender of reproductive rights.

Speaking at a campaign stop on Thursday, Trump said he would require the government or insurance companies to cover all costs for IVF if elected to a second term as president in November.

"Because we want more babies, to put it very nicely," Trump told supporters in Potterville, Michigan, a key battleground state.

"But the IVF treatments are very expensive," the Republican Party candidate added. "It's very hard for many people to do it, and to get it. But I've been in favour of IVF right from the beginning."

Trump did not elaborate on how he would fund the plans.

Trump also said he would allow new parents to deduct "major newborn expenses" from their taxes if re-elected.

Trump also appeared to suggest that he would vote in favour of an upcoming ballot measure in Florida to guarantee a right to an abortion until foetal viability, although a campaign adviser later said the former president had not revealed whether he would support the measure.

Trump's comments come as he seeks to moderate Republicans' image on reproductive access, which has been cited as a drag on the party's standing among women.

Meanwhile, Trump asked a federal court late Thursday to intervene in his New York hush money criminal case, seeking a pathway to overturn his felony conviction and indefinitely delay his sentencing scheduled for next month. —*AP*

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump dances, in La Crosse. **PHOTO: PTI**

'MISOGYNISTIC' TRUMP ATTACKS WOMEN

On Kamala Harris & Hillary Clinton:

Funny how b***s impacted both their careers differently**

On Kamala Harris:

She's so bad. She's so pathetic. She's so f*ing bad**

She spent her whole damn life down on her knees

On being famous:

They (women) let you do it. You can do anything. Grab 'em by the p*y**

Kamala defends her policy on key issues

She talked on decriminalising border crossings

SAVANNAH, 30 AUG

Vice President Kamala Harris has defended shifting away from some of her more liberal positions in her first major television interview of her presidential campaign, but insisted her "values have not changed" even as she is "seeking consensus".

Sitting with her running mate Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, Harris on Thursday was asked about changes in her policies over the years, specifically her reversals on fracking and decriminalising illegal border crossings.

"I think the most important and most significant aspect of my policy perspective and decisions is my values have not changed," Harris replied.

The interview with CNN's Dana Bash gave Harris a chance to try to quell criticism that she has eschewed uncontrolled environments while also giving her a fresh platform to define her campaign and test her political mettle ahead of an upcoming debate with former President Donald Trump set for 10 September.

Democratic presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris poses for photos at a campaign rally in Savannah **PHOTO: PTI**

But it also carried risk as her team tries to build on momentum from the ticket shakeup following Joe Biden's exit and last week's Democratic National Convention.

Harris also brushed off Trump's questioning of her racial identity after the former president said she "happened to turn Black". Harris, who is of Black and South Asian heritage, said it was the "same old, tired playbook".

"Next question."

Harris said serving with Biden was "one of the greatest honours of my career," as she recounted the moment he called to tell her he was stepping down and would support her. —*PTI*

12 Pakistan family members killed in landslide

PESHAWAR, 30 AUG

At least 12 members of a family, including nine children, were killed when a massive landslide triggered by heavy monsoon rain hit a house in northwestern Pakistan on Friday, officials said. The tragic incident took place in the Maidan area of Upper Dir district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said. The law enforcers said all 12 bodies have been retrieved from the debris and sent to the hospital for medico-legal formalities. Two women, one man and nine children were killed in the incident, the Dawn newspaper quoted an official as saying. Pakistan has been hit by heavy monsoon rains in recent days. Pakistan's annual monsoon season runs from July through September. —*PTI*

2 women lock toddler in plane toilet in China

BEIJING, 30 AUG

Two women in China have been accused of child abuse after they separated a crying toddler from her grandmother and locked her in the toilet of a plane, on a domestic flight. In a video uploaded by one of the women to social media, the girl can been seen wailing and trying to get out of the locked lavatory door. One of the women can be heard saying "if you stop crying, you can go out" and "if you stop crying, auntie will take you back to grandma". Neither of the women are thought to be related to the child. The incident took place on a 24 August flight from Guiyang, a city in south-west China, to Shanghai. Juneyao Airlines, which operated the flight, confirmed what happened. —***Courtesy, The Guardian***

USD 25K reward on woman accused of murder

TEXAS, 30 AUG

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) on Thursday announced a reward of up to USD 25,000 for information leading to the arrest of Cindy Rodriguez-Singh, who is wanted for the murder of her young son, Noel Alvarez. Notably, Singh has ties to India and Mexico. She is wanted for allegedly killing her 6-year-old son, who hasn't been seen alive since October 2022. Last year in 2023, a federal arrest warrant was issued for Singh after she was charged with capital murder in the District Court of Tarrant County, Texas. In 2023 the case started when Texas department of family and protective services requested the Everman police department officers to conduct a welfare check on the boy. —***Agencies***

Israel agrees to pauses in fighting for Gaza polio drive

TEL AVIV/GAZA CITY, 30 AUG

The World Health Organization (WHO) says it has received a "preliminary commitment" allowing for temporary "humanitarian pauses" in Gaza to distribute polio vaccines as deteriorating conditions caused by Israel's war fuel the spread of disease and illness throughout the besieged strip.

Rik Peeperkorn, WHO representative in the Palestinian territory, said on Thursday that the three pauses will take place from 6am to 3pm and last for three days each in different areas of Gaza, beginning on Sunday.

"I'm not going to say this is the ideal way forward. But this is a workable way forward," Peeperkorn said. "It will happen and should happen because we have an agreement."

Agreement consists of temporary pauses in separate areas of Gaza with goal of vaccinating 640,000 children **PHOTO: X@HABIBI6IXTV**

Humanitarian and medical groups said Israel's nearly 11-month assault on Gaza has displaced almost the entire population and created unsanitary conditions that have allowed the proliferation of diseases.

Abdel-Rahman Abu El-Jedian, a 10-month-old Palestinian, became partially paralysed this week after contracting polio, which had not been present in Gaza for 25 years. Peeperkorn said the campaign will aim to vaccinate 640,000 children under the age of 10.

. —*Courtesy, Al-Jazeera/AP*

Russia advances into Ukraine; captures 2 villages

KYIV, 30 AUG

Russia claimed to have captured two more villages in eastern Ukraine amid heavy fighting in the Kursk region. Russian forces captured two villages in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Debris from intercepted Russian drones damaged several buildings in Kyiv overnight on Thursday, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko reported.

This comes as the third large-scale aerial attack by Russia against the capital in the past four days.

Several explosions could be heard in Kyiv and Kyiv Oblast amid an air raid alert. Air defense had been active in most of central and northern Ukraine.

Drone debris reportedly fell in at least three districts of the capital, causing a fire in one of the affected areas. First responders have been dispatched to the scene.

In the Holosiivskyi district, drone debris damaged the doors and windows of one of the apartments. No casualties were reported, according to the mayor.

Kyiv remains a frequent target of the Russian attacks. On 26 August Russia launched a massive missile and drone attack against Ukraine, killing seven people, injuring nearly 50 others, and targeting the country's energy infrastructure. Three people were injured following the attack in Kyiv Oblast, the police said in a statement. One of those injured was hurt when a downed drone fell on a road, destroying a car, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko reported.

—*Agencies*

US-made jet crashes, 1 dead: Ukraine

Ukraine has announced that one of a handful of F-16 fighter jets given by its Western allies to fight Russia's invasion crashed while repelling a major Russian aerial attack. The pilot was killed in the incident after Russia launched more than 200 missiles. *Courtesy, Al-Jazeera*

TELEGRAM ROW

Macron defends giving citizenship to Pavel

BELGRADE, 30 AUG

French President Emmanuel Macron has defended his decision to give special fast-track citizenship to Telegram messaging app CEO Pavel Durov, who is now under preliminary charges in France over alleged criminal activity on his popular platform.

Macron on Thursday also said he was unaware that Durov was coming to France before his surprise weekend arrest, and had no plans to meet with him.

Free-speech advocates, far-right figures and authoritarian governments around the world have spoken out in Durov's defence and criticised French authorities over the case. Durov was freed on 5 million euro bail but barred from leaving France and ordered to report to a police station twice a week pending further investigation.

Pavel Durov **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

Prosecutors accuse Durov of complicity in allowing drug trafficking and sharing of sexual images of children on Telegram. The case has called attention to the challenges of policing illegal activity online — and to the Russia-born Durov's unusual biography and multiple passports. —*AP*

Germany deports Afghans for first time since 2021

BERLIN, 30 AUG

Germany deported Afghan nationals on Friday for the first time since August 2021, when the Taliban returned to power.

A government spokesman described the Afghan nationals as convicted criminals but did not immediately respond to a request for comment to clarify their offenses.

The deportations occurred a week after a deadly knife attack in Solingen where the suspect is a Syrian citizen who had applied for asylum in Germany. The suspect was supposed to be deported to Bulgaria last year but reportedly disappeared and avoided deportation. He was ordered held Sunday on suspicion of murder and membership in a terrorist organization pending further investigation and a possible indictment. —*AP*

Brazil judge blocks Starlink accounts

BRASÍLIA, 30 AUG

Brazilian Supreme Court judge Alexandre de Moraes has moved to block the financial accounts of billionaire Elon Musk's Starlink as an ongoing feud leaves his social media platform X on the brink of being taken down in the country.

Starlink confirmed on Thursday it received an order from the judge that prevents the company from conducting financial transactions in Brazil and said in a post on X that it would address the order legally.

Elon Musk **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

De Moraes's decision on Thursday to sanction Starlink, the satellite broadband unit of Musk's SpaceX, is a response to the lack of legal representatives in Brazil for the X social network, a Supreme Court source told the Reuters news agency.

Musk said de Moraes "is an outright criminal of the worst kind, masquerading as a judge" in response to a post on the subject. At issue is whether de Moraes can order the social network to block certain accounts accused of spreading lies and distortions, a request Musk has denounced as censorship. —*AP*

6 DEAD AS TYPHOON SHANSHAN HITS JAPAN, FLIGHTS HIT

TOKYO, 30 AUG

Typhoon Shanshan continued its journey after making landfall in Kyushu, killing six people.

Typhoon had weakened by Friday morning, but winds of up to 126km per hour were still blowing.

More than four million people had been advised to evacuate, and authorities issued the highest alerts in some areas.

However, only some 30,000 had been evacuated as of Thursday, mainly in Kyushu, disaster management minister Yoshifumi Matsumura said.

Bullet trains in Kyushu were halted. Several ferry and rail services were also canceled. Japan Airlines and ANA had already canceled about 600 flights for Friday.

Just earlier this month, Japan had been hit by Typhoon Ampil.

—*Courtesy, DW India*

RARE 3,500-YEAR-OLD JAR

Israeli museum forgives boy for breaking jar

HAIFA, 30 AUG

A 4-year-old boy who accidentally broke a rare 3,500-year-old jar in an Israeli museum has been forgiven and even invited back, as curators hope to turn the disaster into a teachable moment.

Alex Geller, the boy's father, said his son — the youngest of three — is exceptionally curious, and that the moment he heard the crash last Friday, "please let that not be my child" was the first thought that raced through his head.

"He's not a kid that usually destroys things, he just wanted to see what was inside," Geller told The Associated Press.

The Bronze Age jar is one of many artifacts exhibited out in the open, part of the Hecht Museum's vision of letting visitors explore history without glass barriers, said Inbar Rivlin, the director of the museum, which is associated with Haifa University in northern Israel.

4-year-old museum visitor accidentally smashes Bronze Age jar —which had survived intact at least 3,500 years **PHOTO: X@TARUNMITTAL56**

There were a lot of kids at the museum that day, and Geller said he fervently prayed the damage had been caused by someone else. When he turned around and saw it was his son, he was "in complete shock".

The Hecht Museum hopes to harness that interest to encourage more people to visit the museum and learn about artifact restoration.

The jar, which had been on display at the museum for 35 years, was one of the only containers of its size and period that was still complete when it was discovered. It was likely used to hold wine or oil, and it dates back to between 2200 and 1500 B.C.

Roee Shafir, a restoration expert at the museum, said the restoration will take several days because they use special glue to connect just a few pieces at a time. —*AP*

Pakistan security forces kill 5 militants in intel ops

KARACHI, 30 AUG

At least five terrorists of a banned militant group were killed and three were injured in ongoing intelligence-based operations in multiple districts in Balochistan following a string of terror attacks last weekend.

The security forces launched the operations after the banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) — a separatist outfit — claimed responsibility for carrying out at least four terror attacks across the restive province, killing about 50 persons, including 14 security forces.

At least 21 militants were also gunned down in the attacks with one of them targeting 23 passengers belonging to the Punjab province who were offloaded from four trucks and gunned down in Musakhail district after being identified by their national ID cards.

The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Friday: "The security forces are conducting extensive intelligence-based operations (IBOs) to hunt down the perpetrators of these heinous acts.

"On the night [of] 29 and 30 August, in three separate IBOs in Kech, Panjgur, and Zhob district, five terrorists were sent to hell by the security forces, while three terrorists got injured during the intense fire exchange," the ISPR said.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also visited Quetta for high-level meetings and vowed to crush the terror outfits while President Asif Ali Zardari said there would be a "complete elimination" of terrorism from the mineral-rich Balochistan province.

—*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Gold rises ₹100; silver remains flat

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Gold prices rose Rs 100 to Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday due to fresh demand by local jewellers. The yellow metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 74,250 per 10 grams in the previous trade. Silver prices, however, remained flat at Rs 87,200 per kilogram on Friday, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Additionally, gold of 99.5 per cent purity edged up Rs 100 to Rs 74,000 per 10 grams from the previous close of Rs 73,900 per 10 grams. Globally, Comex gold is trading at USD 2,557.10 per ounce, down by USD 3.20 per ounce or 0.12 per cent. Silver was also marginally down at USD 29.93 per ounce in the international markets. *—PTI*

Rupee rises 3 paise to close at 83.86 against US dollar

MUMBAI, 30 AUG

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled for the day higher by 3 paise at 83.86 (provisional) against the American currency on Friday, supported by a firm trend in domestic equities and the weakness of the American currency in the overseas market. Forex traders said the rupee gained on Friday as domestic markets touched fresh record highs. Moreover, fresh foreign fund inflows also supported the rupee. However, a surge in crude oil prices capped sharp gains. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.83 and touched an intra-day high of 83.82 and a low of 83.88 against the American currency. The domestic currency finally settled at 83.86 (provisional), 3 paise higher from its previous close. *—PTI*

Accenture appoints Arundhati as group CEO

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Global professional services firm Accenture on Friday named Arundhati Chakraborty as group chief executive of Accenture Operations, effective from 1 September. Chakraborty replaces Yusuf Tayob, who will now chair the global Communications, Media & Technology industry practices at Accenture. "With incredibly deep expertise partnering with clients to drive large-scale transformations in their operations, Arundhati is uniquely positioned to lead this critical part of our business. Arundhati's commitment to developing talent and new services based on gen AI and automation make her the ideal leader for our Operations business," said Accenture CEO Julie Sweet. *—PTI*

Mahindra Group, Sentrycs sign anti-drone pact

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Mahindra Group and Israel's Sentrycs Ltd on Friday said they have signed a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore opportunities for developing and providing 'differentiated anti-drone solutions' in India. The solutions will cover civilian and military applications, the two companies said in a joint statement. The MoU relates to the 'anti-drone systems' technology space and will focus on the Transfer of Technology (TOT) and manufacturing of radio frequency-based counter-drone solutions under the government of India's 'Make in India' initiative, it added. The 'differentiated anti-drone solution' is an autonomous and integrated system with a command and control (C2) module, and enables detection, tracking, identification and mitigation of incoming drones. *—PTI*

SIA to pay Rs 2.5K cr to keep 21% stake in AI

600 non-flying staff likely to be impacted

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Singapore Airlines (SIA) said it would be investing Rs 2,058.5 crore in Air India as part of the transaction, the airline would have a 25.1 per cent stake in an enlarged Air India Group after Vistrar merger.

Air India CEO and MD Campbell Wilson on Friday said that for Vistara flights on or after 12 November, the flight numbers will change to Air India ones, even though in nearly all cases the aircraft, schedule and operating crew will be unchanged until early 2025.

A set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) has also been prepared for passengers to help them with more information amid the merger process. As part of the merger process, Air India has already started the fitment process for the staff.

In July, sources said that around 600 non-flying staff of Air India and Vistara are likely to be impacted by the merger and efforts will be made to provide job opportunities to the affected employees within Air India group and Tata companies.

Currently, the Tatas-owned Air India Group comprises Air India, Air India Express, AIX Connect (formerly AirAsia India) and Vistara. As part of consolidation of Tata Group's airline business, AIX Connect is in the process of merging with Air India Express.

Air India said the FDI approval is an important milestone that facilitates the merger process between Vistara and the airline, and the broader transformation of the Air India Group.

The airline's loyalty programme will be migrated to Air India.

In a message to its customers, Vistara on Friday said their personal data will be transferred to Air India while maintaining the highest level of confidentiality throughout the merger process. *—PTI*

12 November has been set as the date for the movement of aircraft and crew of Vistara to Air India PHOTO: PTI

- Vistara, a joint venture between Tata Group and Singapore Airlines will have a 25.1 per cent stake in Tata Group-owned Air India

PHOTO: PTI

SHARES OF SPICEJET CARRIERS SLUMP OVER 6%

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Shares of SpiceJet on Friday morning tumbled over 6 per cent after aviation watchdog DGCA decided to place the crisis-hit firm under enhanced surveillance.

The stock tanked 6.38 per cent to Rs 62 on the BSE after a weak beginning.

DGCA on Thursday decided to place SpiceJet under enhanced surveillance that will entail increased spot checks and night surveillance to ensure safety of the airline's operations.

Based on reports of cancellation of flights and financial stress being experienced by SpiceJet, DGCA said it conducted a special audit of the airline's engineering facilities on August 7 and 8 and certain deficiencies were found during the audit.

The no-frills carrier has been grappling with multiple headwinds, including financial and legal woes, and is also in the process of raising funds. *—PTI*

SENSEX CLIMBS 231.16 PTS

Sensex, Nifty extend gains to scale fresh peaks

MUMBAI, 30 AUG

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty marched higher to scale fresh lifetime closing peaks on Friday, tracking a largely firm trend in global markets and renewed foreign fund inflows.

Buying in index majors Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank and Infosys also fuelled the rally.

Rallying for the ninth straight session, the 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 231.16 points or 0.28 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 82,365.77. During the day, it jumped 502.42 points or 0.61 per cent to hit a record intra-day peak of 82,637.03.

The NSE Nifty soared 83.95 points or 0.33 per cent to hit a new lifetime closing high of 25,235.90, taking its victorious run to the 12th day in a row. During the day, it surged 116.4 points or 0.46 per cent to hit a new record intra-day peak. .

Among the 30 Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, NTPC, Power Grid, Bajaj Finserv, Bharti Airtel and Tata Consultancy Services were the biggest gainers.

In contrast, Tata Motors, HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries, Tech Mahindra and ITC were among laggards.

PHOTO: PTI

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 3,259.56 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data.

Domestic Institutional Investors lapped up equities worth Rs 2,690.85 crore.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.08 per cent to USD 80 a barrel.

The BSE benchmark jumped 349.05 points or 0.43 per cent to settle at an all-time closing high of 82,134.61 on Thursday, extending its winning momentum to the eighth day in a row.

Rallying for the 11th straight session, the Nifty surged 99.60 points or 0.40 per cent to settle at a new closing high of 25,151.95. *—PTI*

SEBI cancels 47 stock brokers' registrations

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Capital markets regulator SEBI on Friday cancelled the registration of 39 stock brokers and seven commodity brokers after they failed to meet the registration requirements.

Additionally, the regulator cancelled the registration of 22 depository participants who are no longer affiliated to any depository.

The main reason for cancelling the registration certificate of these entities, is to prevent them from misusing their SEBI registration without being an active participant of a depository or a member of a recognized stock exchange, thereby protecting unaware investors, the regulator said in three separate orders.

Despite the cancellation of their registration, these entities remain liable for any actions they took or failed to take as stock brokers or commodity brokers or depository participants. They are also responsible for paying any outstanding fees, dues, and interest owed to SEBI, it added.

Seven commodity brokers whose registrations have been cancelled are -- Wealth Mantra Commodities, Sumpoorna Comtrade, Chaitanya Commodities, BVK Pulses Online Trading Company, Infonic India Financial Services, Financial Leaders Commodities and Wellindia Commodities. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

SEBI's new rules for finfluencers

Markets watchdog SEBI has amended norms in a bid to regulate unregistered financial influencers or finfluencers. As per the notifications, the persons regulated by SEBI and the agents of such persons will not have any association like any transaction involving money, referral of a client, interaction of information technology systems with any other person who, directly or indirectly, provides advice, recommendation or makes explicit claim of return. *—PTI*

ALL-CASH DEAL

Adani ports acquire 80% stake in Astro Offshore for $185B

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ) on Friday said it has entered into an agreement to acquire 80 per cent stake in Astro Offshore for USD 185 million in an all-cash deal.

The company in a statement said the existing promoters of Astro will hold the remaining 20 per cent stake.

"APSEZ has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire 80 per cent stake in Astro, in an all-cash deal for USD 185 million, implying an EV of USD 235 million and EV/ FY25E EBITDA at 4.4x. The transaction is expected to be value accretive from the first year itself," it said.

PHOTO: PTI

According to the statement, incorporated in 2009, Astro is a leading global OSV operator in the Middle East, India, Far East Asia and Africa.

Astro owns a fleet of 26 Offshore Support Vessels (OSVs) comprising Anchor Handling Tugs (AHTs), flat top barges, Multipurpose Support Vessels (MPSVs) and workboats, and provides vessel management and complementary services, the statement said.

APSEZ whole-time director and CEO Ashwani Gupta said, "The acquisition will also give us access to an impressive roster of Tier-1 customers while further consolidating our footprint across the Arabian Gulf, the Indian subcontinent and Far East Asia."

APSEZ, a part of the globally diversified Adani Group, is the largest port developer and operator in India with 7 strategically located ports and terminals on the west coast and 8 ports and terminals on the east coast. *—PTI*

TN inks ₹900 crore deal with Microchip, Nokia, PayPal & 3 others

CHENNAI, 30 AUG

Tamil Nadu government inked pacts with leading industrial companies including Nokia, PayPal, Yield Engineering Systems, Microchip, Infinx, and Applied Materials for a commitment of Rs 900 crore to provide employment to 4,100 people in Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai, government said.

Six companies signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) in the presence of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin and officials during the investors meeting in San Francisco.

The chief minister, who is leading a high-level official delegation, is currently on a tour to the US till 14 September to attract investments into Tamil Nadu, as part of an ambitious goal to transform the state into a USD one trillion economy by 2030. He left for the US on 27 August. He participated in a meeting with potential investors in San Francisco on Thursday.

A MoU was signed with Nokia, represented by Chief Strategy and Technology Officer Nishant Batra and President - Fixed Network Business Group Sandy Motley, for a new Nokia R&D Center, their Largest Fixed Network test bed in the world, for innovations in 10G, 25G, 50G, and 100G PON, Fixed Wireless Access, MDU solutions, to be set up at SIPCOT, Siruseri, Chengalpattu at a cost of Rs 450 crore with 100 jobs.

An agreement with the American multinational financial technology company supporting online money transfers PayPal, represented by Srini Venkatesan and Zi-Yang David Fan, for an Advanced Development Centre focused on AI, to be set up at Chennai, generating 1,000 jobs, was signed on the occasion.

The TN government signed a MoU with Microchip, headquartered in Chandler, Arizona, represented by Patrick Johnson and Bruce Weyer, for an R&D Centre in semiconductor technology to be set up at Semmancherry, Chennai, at cost of Rs 250 crore, with 1,500 jobs. *—PTI*

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin during a meeting with business leaders, in San Francisco, on Friday PHOTO: PTI

Banking liquidity has fallen to ₹0.95L cr: Report

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Liquidity in the Indian banking system has seen a significant decline this month says a research report by the Union Bank of India. It says the banking liquidity has fallen to Rs 0.95 lakh crore as on 28 August from a peak of Rs 2.86 lakh crore.

The report highlights that the decline in liquidity continued throughout this month. At the beginning of the month, on 2 August banking liquidity was at Rs 2.56 lakh crore which has reduced to Rs 1.55 lakh crore on August 16th and now at Rs 0.95 lakh crore on 28 August.

This downward trend in banking liquidity comes despite repeated appeals by the Finance Minister and the RBI Governor to banks to take measures to boost liquidity in the system.

The continuous reduction in liquidity raises concerns, it could have broader implications for economic activities

Union Minister for Finance, Nirmala Sitharaman during her review meeting with the Public Sector Banks (PSBs) this month deliberated on deposit mobilisation issue, the Union Finance Minister stated that while the credit growth has picked up, the mobilisation of deposits could further be improved to fund the credit growth sustainably and asked banks to make concerted efforts to garner deposits by conducting special drives.

PHOTO: ANI

RBI Governor Shaktikant Das also highlighted that traditionally, banks were the primary choice for households to invest their money. However, there has been a noticeable change in consumer behaviour, with a growing preference for capital markets and other financial intermediaries. *—ANI*

FOREX KITTY HITS RECORD HIGH OF $681.69 BILLION

MUMBAI, 30 AUG

India's forex reserves jumped by USD 7.023 billion to touch a new high of USD 681.688 billion in the week ended 23 August, the RBI said on Friday.

The overall reserves had jumped by USD 4.546 billion to USD 674.664 billion in the previous reporting week.

The previous all-time high for the overall reserves was recorded at USD 674.919 billion as on 2 August.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

Gold reserves increased by USD 893 million to USD 60.997 billion during the week, the RBI said.

India's reserve position with the IMF was up by USD 30 million to USD 4.68 billion in the reporting week, the apex bank data showed. *—PTI*

FIRST IN INDIA

Cochin airport to get largest luxury lounge

COCHIN, 30 AUG

Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) is all set to launch a world-class airport experience at budget rates for its passengers. Kerala Chief Minister Sri. Pinarayi Vijayan will inaugurate CIAL's new venture, 0484 AERO LOUNGE, on Sunday, 1 September, 2024, at 4 PM at Terminal 2.

Built on the revolutionary concept of 'affordable luxury', the 0484 Aero Lounge emphasizes an exceptional and premium airport lounge experience at hourly rates for travellers and Visitors. Christened after Ernakulam's STD code, 0484 AERO LOUNGE combines the tradition, art, backwaters, landscape and flora that evoke the unique beauty of Kerala with special representation of the local culture in contemporary aesthetics, budget-friendly accommodations and more.

Spanning 50,000 square feet, it includes 37 rooms, four suites, three boardrooms, two conference halls, a co-working space, a gym, a spa, a library, an exclusive café lounge and a restaurant. It offers an innovative experience of aesthetic, self-contained luxury. It has around 41 Guest rooms, Boardrooms, Conference halls, Co-Working spaces and a Lounge within the Airport but outside the Security Hold Area, making it accessible to both passengers and visitors.

Located outside the Security Hold Areas, right next to the business jet terminal T2, and adjacent to both domestic and international terminals, the lounge is accessible to both passengers and visitors alike. *—PTI*

The airport is set to launch world class experience at budget rates for it's passengers and visitors PHOTO: X / @CMOKERALA

- Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) is all set to launch a world-class airport experience at budget rates for its passengers on 1 September

'India can be in Maserati's top 10 global markets'

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Italian luxury carmaker Maserati believes India has the potential to be among its top ten global markets in the mid-term with the country's entrepreneurs driving its sales, according to the company's Head of Overseas Markets, Philippe Claverol.

The company, which on Friday launched its GranTurismo model with prices starting at Rs 2.72 crore, is also studying the feasibility of introducing its electric vehicle range in India.

Currently, North America, Italy, Switzerland, China, Japan, Australia, Taiwan and the UAE are the top global markets for Maserati and India with less than 50 units sold last year is still a small market, he added.

PHOTO: PTI

Also, India is a country with a lot of appreciation for luxury products, he said, adding "we feel that there is a good match". In order to enhance its presence in India, Maserati is expanding sales network,

Maserati already has a dealership in Mumbai and opened a new one on Friday here in the national capital and will open one in Bengaluru later this year, Claverol said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: AP

IIS signs MoU with UWW to boost wrestling in India

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

The Inspire Institute of Sport (IIS) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United World Wrestling (UWW), the global governing body for wrestling, to develop the sport in India. The MoU was formalised at UWW's hospitality venue, the Wrestling House, located on a boat near the Eiffel Tower in Paris. The agreement aims to establish a collaborative framework for developing wrestling in India through various mutually beneficial programs, initiatives, projects, and activities. The institute has played a pivotal role in developing wrestling in India, with Olympic bronze medalists Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik among its notable athletes. Four IIS athletes are also set to compete at the upcoming U20 World Championships in Spain. *—PTI*

Andre Agassi to flag off pickleball tour in India

NEW DELHI, 30 AUG

Eight-time Grand Slam champion and former World No. 1 tennis player Andre Agassi is set to visit India in January next year to inaugurate the PWR DUPR Indian Tour and League, a major event that aims to popularise pickleball in the country. The PWR DUPR Indian Tour and League follows the recent introduction of a new rankings structure by Pickleball World Rankings (PWR), along with the launch of the PWR World Tour and PWR World Series. In a video message to his Indian fans, Agassi said, "I'm excited to visit India and bring the excitement of pickleball to its fans. I look forward to the PWR DUPR Indian Tour & League and hope it will be a great success in the country." Agassi has won four Australian Open titles, a French Open and Wimbledon each, and two US Open titles. *—PTI*

Indian-American Theegala lies ninth at Tour C'ship

ATLANTA, 30 AUG

Starting with a three-stroke advantage thanks to his FedEx Cup standings, Indian-American golfer Sahith Theegala shot a four-under 67 in the first round to take the ninth spot in the TOUR Championship. Theegala, who has qualified for this year's President's Cup, is making his debut at the TOUR Championships alongside another Indian-American Akshay Bhatia and Indo-British player Aaron Rai. Rai, who started at even par, shot five-under and was five-under to be tied 14th, while another Indian-American Bhatia, starting at two-under, shot one-under 70 and was three-under for the 25th positions. At the TOUR Championship, leading players get starting strokes based on their finish in the FedExCup standings. *—PTI*

AVANI BREAKS THE BARRIER FOR WOMEN

She acknowledges her feat of winning Gold

PARIS, 30 AUG

A modest but supremely confident Avani Lekhara on Friday acknowledged her feat of winning a second consecutive gold medal in the Paralympics by declaring it has "broken the barrier" for women athletes in India.

Avani successfully defended her women's 10m air rifle gold medal which she had clinched in Tokyo Paralympics with a record score of 249.7 in the final, with compatriot Mona clinching the bronze.

"I never really thought... I was just thinking of doing the best that I can do that day," Avani told reporters from Paris when asked how she felt becoming the first Indian woman to win two Paralympics gold medals.

"I am happy that I was able to win the gold for my country. It broke the barriers for other women in the country, they can look up and see 'okay, women can also win gold in India', and I am grateful that I was the first one to achieve that," she said.

Avani Lekhara after winning the gold medal in the women's 10m air rifle (SH1) event at Paralympics 2024, on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

Avani said while she has already shifted her focus on the next events — women's 50m rifle 3 positions SH1 and mixed 10m air rifle prone SH1 — she had to overcome the challenge of a surgery earlier this year.

Manish Narwal was once again on the podium on Friday in the men's 10m air pistol (final, clinching silver medal after his gold in Tokyo. *—PTI*

COUNTRIES				
1. UK	5	5	3	13
2. China	5	5	2	12
3. Aus	3	2	2	7
4. France	2	3	0	5
13. India	1	1	2	4

SEINE WATER ISSUES RESURFACE AT PARALYMPICS

PARIS, 30 AUG

Concerns over water quality in the Seine River resurfaced at the Paralympic Games when organizers changed the schedule for para triathlon races.

All 11 medal events are to be held on one day, 1 September, instead of two as originally planned, Paris 2024 organizers said in a statement.

Water quality in the Seine River was also a major issue at the Olympics. Bacteria levels in the long-polluted Paris waterway fluctuate constantly depending on weather. Heavy rains cause wastewater and runoff to flow into the river, causing bacteria levels to rise.

Organisers said events can be pushed back to 2 & 3 September "if needed."

Thursday's familiarisation swims took place as planned in the morning. *—PTI*

Great Britain's Para Archer Jodie Grinham returned to the Paralympic stage for the first time since Rio 2016, this time 7 months pregnant. She finished 4th and scored a personal best of 693. *PHOTO: @ PARALYMPIC.ORG*

Some loses & some qualifications on day 2 for Indians

Paris, 30 Aug

Tokyo silver medallist shuttler Suhas Yathiraj and Nitesh Kumar continued their impressive run to secure spots in the men's singles SL4 and SL3 semifinals, respectively, at the Paralympics on Friday. Para table tennis players Bhavinaben and Sonalben Patel bowed out of the women's doubles WD 10 contest. The mixed pair of Anita and Narayana managed a fifth-place. *—PTI*

Nitesh Kumar *PHOTO: ANI*

KEY EVENTS TODAY

SHOTPUT

MEN'S SHOT PUT F37 FINAL | 12:22 AM

Manu Khatkar, Haryana

Manu represented India at the 2022 Asian Para Games at Hangzhou, China and won a bronze medal in the shot put F37 category. In 2024, he represented India at the World Championship in Kobe, Japan where he finished 8th.

BADMINTON

MIXED DOUBLES SL/SU | 12:50 AM

Palak Kohli, Jalandar

Kohli is the only para badminton athlete from the country to qualify for both singles and women's doubles for Tokyo Paralympics 2021.

Suhas Lalinakere Yathiraj, Uttar Pradesh

He is an Arjuna awardee Indian professional Para-Badminton player currently ranked world No.1 in men's singles and silver medalist in SL-4 category in Tokyo Paralympics 2021.

MIXED DOUBLES SL/SU 12:50AM

Kumar Nitesh, Rajasthan

Kumar Nitesh is an Indian professional para-badminton player. Having made his international debut in 2016, he became world number 3 in the SL3 category.

Thulasimathi Murugesan, Tamil Nadu

She represented India at the 2022 Asian Para Games held at Gangzhou, China. She won three medals in para badminton competitions, SL3-SU5 and SU5 classes.

WOMEN'S SINGLES SL3 | 12:00 PM

Mandeep Kaur, Uttarakhand

She won two bronze medals at the 2022 Asian Para Games. She claimed bronze in Badminton women's double in the SL3 category.

SHOOTING

MEN'S 10M AIR RIFLE | 1:00 AM

S.M. Unhalkar, Kolhapur

He is currently World No 13 in Men's 10m Air Rifle standing SH1. He Qualified For Paralympics Games at Tokyo, Japan and represented India Team in Shooting at 2020 Summer Paralympics.

TRACK CYCLING

WOMEN'S 500M TIME TRIAL C1-3 | 1:30 PM

Jyoti Gaderiya, Maharashtra

She qualified to represent India at the 2024 Summer Paralympics at Paris. She competes in the women's elite C2 category. At the Paris Paralympics on 29 August 2024, she finished 10th in the Women's 3000 m individual pursuit C1-3 .

MEN'S 1000M TIME TRIAL C1-3 | 1:50 PM

Arshad Shaik Andhra Pradesh

His first international competition was in Tajikistan, where he narrowly missed the podium, finishing fourth.

ATHLETICS

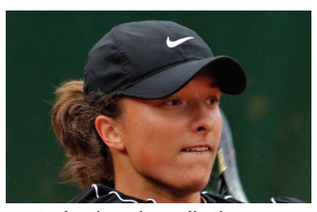
MEN'S JAVELIN THROW F57 | 10:30 PM

P Kumar, Uttar Pradesh

Kumar won the silver medal in the men's high jump T64 event at the 2020 Summer Paralympics. In 2023, he won the men's high jump T64 at the 2022 Asian Para Games. He also broke the Games' record of 2.02m in the final.

ALCARAZ & NAOMI OUT

Sinner, Swiatek into 3rd round of US open



Iga Swiatek and Jannik Sinner

PHOTOS: WIKIPEDIA

NEW YORK, 30 AUG

Iga Swiatek and Jannik Sinner flashed their No. 1 form with powerful performances that moved them into the third round of the US Open.

Carlos Alcaraz and Naomi Osaka couldn't quite find the games that once had them on top of the rankings.

Those past U.S. Open champions were both knocked out Thursday night, with the No. 3-seeded Alcaraz's 15-match Grand Slam winning streak halted by a 6-1, 7-5, 6-4 loss to 74th-ranked Botic van de Zandschulp.

Swiatek raced by Japanese qualifier Ena Shibahara 6-0, 6-1, finishing off the match in 65 minutes. It took the 2022 U.S. Open champion longer than that to play the second set of her first-round match, when she needed a tiebreaker that she eventually closed out in 72 minutes.

"I just felt the rhythm was much better," Swiatek said. "I was a bit tense in my last match, so today I just wanted to focus on the right things."

Sinner dropped the first set in his opening match in New York but didn't encounter much trouble while facing his second straight American on Ashe. The Italian earned his 50th victory of the season, including his ATP Tour-leading 30th on hard courts.

Sinner beat Michelsen for the second time this month, having also won a second-round match in Cincinnati shortly before it was revealed that he tested positive twice for an anabolic steroid in March. *—PTI*

Bopanna & Ebden move to 2nd round

New York, 30 Aug

India's Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden moved into the second round of the US Open men's doubles competition with a win over Netherland's Sander Arends and Robin Haase.

Bopanna and Ebden sailed past their Dutch opponents 6-3, 7-5 in a 64-minute opening round contest. Last edition's runner up, the Indo-Australian pair has arrived to the final Grand Slam of season on back of consecutive losses but duo backed itself and got the job done. The second seeds, will face unseeded pair of Spain's Roberto Carballes and Coria. *—PTI*

Pooja breaks U20 record, enters Championship final

Pooja Singh rewrote the national U20 national record in high jump *PHOTO: X/@MEDIA_SAI*

LIMA, 30 AUG

India's Pooja Singh rewrote the national U20 women's national record in high jump to qualify for the final with a ninth-place finish in the qualification round at the ongoing World Athletics U20 Championships.

The 17-year-old, who hails from Fatehbad district of Haryana, cleared a height of 1.83m to finish second in qualification round group B and ninth overall late Thursday night and qualify for the final to be held on 31 August.

Nine athletes in group A and three in group B made the cut for the final.

Pooja, who started her journey at the Parta Sports Academy under coach Balwan Singh without proper landing mat or equipment, had won gold in the U-14 girls' category with a jump of 1.41m but picked up a quadricep injury which kept out for 15 months.

On her return, Pooja won a gold medal in the U-16 girls' category at the 2022 junior nationals with a new national record of 1.76m before claiming another gold in U-18 category at 2022 youth national championships. *—PTI*

Persistent rain halts Day 1 of Pak vs B'desh 2nd Test match

RAWALPINDI, 30 AUG

Persistent rain washed out the opening day of the second test match between Pakistan and Bangladesh at the Rawalpindi Cricket Stadium on Friday.

Bangladesh leads the two-match series 1-0 after it notched a historic 10-wicket win at the same venue last week when Pakistan was bowled out for an embarrassing 146 in the second innings on the fifth and final day.

Players and team officials stayed in the hotel and umpires called off the play at 12:05 p.m. local time with rain still pouring down and leaving the outfield submerged.

Both teams are in the bottom half of the World Test Championship. *—PTI*

'LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD' FOR BARLA

BHUBANESWAR, 30 AUG

Former India hockey player Lazarus Barla received the 'Lifetime Achievement Award' for the promotion of sports and games at the Biju Patnaik Sports Award presentation ceremony.

On Thursday, Barla was presented with a trophy, a cash award of Rs 4 lakh and a citation during the ceremony by the Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi.

Barla expressed his delight after receiving the award on National Sports Day and told that, "It is a happy moment. Receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award on the birth anniversary of Major Dhyanchand, is a huge deal. CM urged all senior players to contribute to the state in the field of our respective sports so that more and more people get the opportunity to represent the country in the world."

During the ceremony, Paris Olympian Kishore Jena was conferred with the Biju Patnaik Sports Award for outstanding performance in sports and games. Jena, one of the leading javelin throwers in India, was presented with a trophy, a cash award of Rs 3 lakh, and a citation.

In the Paris Olympics, Jena finished ninth in Group A of the men's javelin throw qualification round and failed to advance to the medal round. *—ANI*

Gulveer smashes 30-yr-old meet record

BENGALURU, 30 AUG

National record holder Gulveer Singh erased a 30-year-old meet record to win the men's 5,000m race on the opening day of the 63rd National Open Athletics Championships here on Friday.

The Services runner clocked 13:54.70 seconds to better the previous meet record of 13:54.72 set in 1994 by Bahadur Singh.

The Services team collected as many as four medals in the morning session in the men's group.

Servin won the first gold of the day in the men's 20km race walk. He clocked 1:25:35.00.

Servin's teammate Arshpreet Singh won bronze (1:26:56.00).

Lovepreet Singh won the fourth medal, a bronze, for Services. He clocked 14:00.89 to finish third in men's 5,000m race.

Gulveer Singh. *PHOTO: SAI MEDIA PHOTO*

Spotlight was also on the women's 400m event. Maharashtra's Aishwarya Mishra advanced to the final with a time of 52.71 seconds, the fastest in the semifinals.

Rupal Chaudhary of Uttar Pradesh was another prominent name who made it to the medal round. *—PTI*

EUROPEAN C'SHIP

Ronaldo included in Portugal's first squad after scoreless Euro 2024

LISBON, 30 AUG

Portugal coach Roberto Martínez has included Cristiano Ronaldo in his squad list for the first two Nations League matches following the veteran forward's disappointing European Championship.

Martínez announced the squad on Friday for its home games against Croatia on 5 September and Scotland on 8 September.

The 39-year-old Ronaldo holds the record of 130 goals for international men's soccer. But he went scoreless in all five of Portugal's games at Euro 2024 before it was eliminated in a penalty shootout by France in the quarterfinals.

Martínez said after Euro 2024 his team is starting "a new cycle for the 2026 World Cup."

Ronaldo would be 41 by the time that tournament in North America kicks off.

Martínez restored Ronaldo to his place in the starting lineup after predecessor Fernando Santos had stunned his team, and nation, by benching him midway through the 2022 World Cup, where he scored in an opening win over Ghana but then went scoreless over the next four games including a quarterfinal upset loss to Morocco. *—PTI*

Cristiano Ronaldo *PHOTOS: X@CRISTIANOFEATS*